



THE STAFF

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

December 2019

Pastor's Message

Dear Friends,

It was the famous philosopher (and pretty good baseball player) Yogi Berra who advised:

"When you come to a fork in the road — take it."

And that is what we did. Well, we chose one way at the fork. And are following it still.

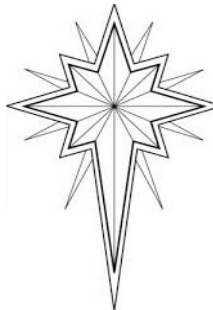
It was just a year ago, after months of careful study, conversation, discernment and prayer, that we took the fork in the road that has led us on the way to pursuing the possibility of developing and building partnerships with other Lutheran congregations in the Hamden-New Haven area in order to strengthen our shared, singular calling to boldly witness to the good news of Jesus in a community, in a world so hungry for his healing mercies.

It has been a fork, a path, well taken. It has been marked by constructive conversations among the five ELCA congregations of in Hamden and New Haven (Bethesda, Trinity, Emanuel, Christ and Good Shepherd), and a willingness to share strengths, ideas, ministries, resources and common paths. It has been made joyful by our two festival worship services on Pentecost and Reformation Sundays when we gathered to sing and pray and dine together as one.

Taking that fork has also been marked by good and promising surprise as last spring we began conversations that led to our now burgeoning relationship with our neighbors of Christ Lutheran Church. The fork we took, the path we followed — the path of partnerships for a better future — now continues to unfold before us with ever new opportunity.

On Sunday, December 8, both of our congregations, each in our own places, will be invited to agree on a carefully composed "covenant of intentions" committing ourselves over the next six months to continue pursuing and building a strong shared ministry. It invites our two congregations to continue finding joy in common purpose and calling, in walking as one.

Copies of this covenant have now been widely distributed — passed out at our informal congregational meeting on November 10, and mailed, either via email or land mail, the week following. It is also included in this issue of The Staff. Please review the covenant with care.



Yogi said take a fork. The Spirit has led us to this fork and onto this path. It is filled with promise, with expectation, and yes, with a good dose of the unknown and surprise yet to come. But we take this fork and follow this road trusting still that God's hand is leading us and God's love supporting us. I urge your continuing prayers for wisdom, courage and faithfulness for the journey yet to come.

Your partner along the way,
Les Swenson,
Transitional Pastor

Upcoming Events

- 12/1 Worship at Christ Lutheran Church
- 12/8 Voters' Meeting
- 12/18 Mid month coffee & conversation
- 12/22 Caroling at Elfriede Fleischmann's
- 12/24 Christmas Eve Eucharist 5:00pm

**LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

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

**The Rev. Leslie Swenson
Transitional Pastor
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**Council Members
1/1/19—12/31/19**

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| President: | Ken Watson |
| Vice-President: | ~vacant~ |
| Treasurer: | Leonard Lye |
| Secretary: | Brenda Samal |
| Christian Education: | ~vacant~ |
| Evangelism/ Publicity: | Leo Goodrich |
| Fellowship: | Linda Kapitan |
| Financial Secretary: | Lisa Ball-Goodrich |
| Stewardship/ Missions: | Starr O'Connor |
| Property: | James Learned |
| Worship: | John Downs |

HOLIDAY GIFTING!

Fifteen tightly packed bags of nonperishable food and other supplies were delivered to Keefe Community Center Soup Kitchen on Monday, November 18th. Recipients were, as always, extremely grateful and happy to see us! In addition, John Downs has made two trips to the Center to deliver frozen turkeys. We don't have a final count at this time....but our freezer looked to heavily "stuffed" with contributions!

Update: Total of **17 turkeys** were delivered to the Hamden Food Bank!

We have been able to collect \$150.00 worth of fellowship donations over the past couple months. These funds will be used to purchase 300, (!), reusable shopping bags from Stop and Shop, also be donated to Keefe Center. (When asked if that is something for which there is a need....I received resounding "YES!... What a great idea!")

Our "Winter Warming" tree will be set up this week. We have already received some contributions of hats, gloves, scarves, and socks. So far most contributions have been adult sizes. I am sure we will also receive child sized items soon. All winter wear will be donated to Life Haven which is a center for victims of domestic abuse. This is a joint project with Christ Church, which they have done in the past. We are happy to be joining them this this year in such a worthy cause.

And as always....THANK YOU to all parishioner who so generously contribute every year to each and every stewardship project. We are truly a "GIFTING" group!



Advent Begins on December 1... A Season of Waiting, Longing, Anticipation and Prayer

It is a fleeting season, only four Sundays. Yet because it is a time of waiting, we can't help but ask, "are we there yet?" We rejoice in the God who comes. Indeed Advent literally means "coming." We journey slowly, taking the blue highway, toward Bethlehem, yearning to hear of the birth of a new creation, a time of hope.

Advent reminds us that not only do we await the news of a child's birth, but we also live in a time of waiting for God to bring to completion all that God has begun in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We live in hope, knowing that God fulfills God's promises. And we live with courage and perseverance, not knowing when that day will come.

"Come Lord Jesus," we pray, "you who have led us to this day, let your light shine in the darkness of this world to lead us into tomorrow, into new days of your making and giving. Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

Worship during this season will begin with the lighting of the Advent wreath, prayer and song marking this time of longing and of increasing light in the midst of the darkness. Each week we will sing a verse of the beloved Advent hymn, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" as we light a new candle on the wreath.

The people of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd and Christ Lutheran Church will continue to worship as one on the first and third Sundays of Advent. On the second and fourth Sundays we will worship in our own places. Worship begins at 10:00 every Sunday. (See the worship schedule included in this newsletter.)

Folks from both congregations are invited to participate in the 9:00 a.m. Bible Study every Sunday. The Scripture readings to be heard

during worship continue to be the focus of the Bible Study. Join the group on December 1, 8, and 22 at Christ Church, on December 15 at LCGS. A Church School class for children, led by Ken Allen of Christ Church, is also held at the same hour (in the same places).

Advent Devotions Online ... Try It!

Luther Seminary, one of the seminaries of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, offers a helpful daily online devotional resource, **God Pause**, which you are invited to use. To sign up for it so you can receive it in a daily email form, go to "luthersem.edu/godpause."

A special Advent devotional resource for 2019, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" is available on the same site. You can download and print it for your daily use. Or you can receive it as a daily email.

Let this season be a time of prayerful waiting, expectation and hope!



POINSETTIA SIGN-UP

Sign-up sheet is posted in the Narthex.
Please add your name and if in memory
of/honor of by December 15.
Plants are \$15.00 each.

From singing “Come thou long expected Jesus”
to “Glory to the newborn King!”...
Come and worship through the coming days of December!

Sunday, December 1, The First Sunday of Advent, 10:00 a.m.

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd worships at Christ Lutheran Church,
600 Shepard Ave., Hamden.

“Come,” Isaiah sings, “let us walk in the light of God.”

Sunday, December 8, Second Sunday of Advent, 10:00 a.m.

At the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 5.13

Sunday, December 15, Third Sunday in Advent, 10:00 a.m.

Both congregations at The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd.

“Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord... Strengthen your hearts, for the
coming of the Lord is near.” James 5.7,8

Sunday, December 22, Fourth Sunday in Advent, 10:00 a.m.

At the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd.

“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”
which means, “God is with us.” Matthew 1.23

Christmas Eve Worship, December 24, 5:00 p.m.

At the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd.

Invite family and friends as we hear the story, sing beloved carols, light the candles, dine at the
feast, rejoicing in the good news of Jesus’ birth.

...“Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is
born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” Luke 2.10-11

Joy to the world!

Sunday, December 29, First Sunday of Christmas, 10:00 a.m.

Both congregations at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd.

The festival continues with more carol singing.

“Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise God in the heights.

Praise the Lord from the earth...

sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,

princes and all rulers of the world;

young men and maidens,

old and young together.

Let them praise the name of the Lord,

whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.”

from Psalm 148

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn king!

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
3680 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut

CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
600 Shephard Avenue, Hamden Connecticut

A COVENANT OF INTENTIONS

December 8, 2019

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Knowing the blessings of our gracious God and trusting the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we the people of The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd and Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church commit ourselves over the next six months, through May, 2020, to a deepening partnership in ministry while exploring the possibilities and opportunities of the two congregations becoming one.

During this time, we commit ourselves to:

- joint worship services. We have been worshipping together twice a month since June, 2019. We will begin worshipping together every Sunday on December 29, 2019. On the first and third Sundays of each month we will worship at Christ Lutheran Church. On the second and fourth Sundays of each month we will worship at Good Shepherd. On fifth Sundays, we will mutually agree on location for worship.
- a shared ministry of mission to our community, to our New Haven Conference and the *New England Synod* and the *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, and to the wider church. We will plan and support our mission outreach and projects together. We will mutually share mission and ministry traditions. We will mutually share mission and ministry information and expectations. We will mutually encourage one another in the joyful pursuit of living the Gospel for the sake of others in Jesus' footsteps.
- shared educational ministries. We will work together in all facets of Sunday School, Confirmation ministry, adult education and the educational opportunities offered to both congregations within our conference, synod, the *ELCA* and ecumenically.
- joint communications within our congregations and from our congregations to the community and wider world. We will begin working together on common newsletters, common directories and mailing lists, common website and Facebook page, etc. We commit ourselves to keeping one another fully informed about internal plans, activities, attitudes and trends.
- building and deepening our relationships with one another. We will plan fellowship activities and events together. We will actively work to recognize and encourage opportunities that help us to become one faith community.
- formal joint Church Council meetings and leadership. While we recognize that each congregation must continue to responsibly administer its own affairs until that time when our two congregations are one, we commit our Church Councils to working together as frequently and as completely as possible and advisable.

Covenant of Intentions, page 2

- sharing financial reporting and planning for 2020. We will be financially transparent with one another and will share all financial data and information toward building a common understanding of our two congregations' financial strengths, weaknesses and needs and toward building a strong common trust.
- the growing cooperation and partnership between the five New Haven/Hamden *ELCA* congregations, and we commit ourselves to continuing in this cooperative ministry and encouraging its growth and success.
- inviting Mr. Jeff Spann, *ELCA* Building Consultant, to come to Hamden to evaluate our buildings and properties and to make recommendations concerning the best use of our properties for the future.
- participation in a modified *C.A.T.* process (*Congregational Assessment Tool*) to assess strengths of our shared congregational ministries, to assess areas that call for development, and to assist in developing a common vision and mission statement for moving into the future. This *C.A.T.* process would be conducted and interpreted with the help of the *New England Synod* staff, probably sometime in late winter/early Spring 2020.
- developing as quickly as possible, with the assistance of the New England Synod, a timeline for progress in our coming together as one congregation and the calling of a pastor.
- working fully and closely with our *New England Synod*, our Bishop James Hazelwood and his staff as we progress along this journey of becoming one congregation.
- writing a *Mission Statement* that will help shape and define our calling into the future.

With faith in God's promise of guidance and a prayer for the love and wisdom of God as we move forward, we make these commitments in the name of our Good Shepherd, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

For the people of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church ...

_____, President

_____, Pastor in charge

For the people of The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd ...

_____, President

_____, Pastor in charge

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

| Date | Acolyte | Worship Assistant | Worship Assistant 2 | Reader | Ushers | Altar Guild |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 12/1 | JOINT SERVICE AT CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH, 600 SHEPHARD AVE, HAMDEN | | | | | |
| 12/8 | Nicholas Papa | Lisa Ball-Goodrich | Starr O'Connor | Lisa Ball-Goodrich | Ruth Lye Leonard Lye | Starr O'Connor |
| 12/15 | Nicholas Papa | Linda Kapitan | Brianne Papa | Linda Kapitan | Joanne Golanski James Learned | Linda Kapitan |
| 12/22 | Nicholas Papa | John Downs | Lisa Ball-Goodrich | Ken Watson | Leo Goodrich Ken Watson | Chuddy Watson |
| Christmas Eve 12/24 5:00pm | Nicholas Papa | Anthony Papa | Brianne Papa | Ken Watson | Starr O'Connor John Downs | Chuddy Watson |
| 12/29 | Nicholas Papa | Lisa Ball-Goodrich | John Downs | Lisa Ball-Goodrich | Ruth Lye Leonard Lye | Starr O'Connor |
| 1/5/2020 | JOINT SERVICE AT CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH, 600 SHEPHARD AVE, HAMDEN | | | | | |

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

Council Meeting

Council met on 11/20. Covenant of Intentions was mailed, emailed and discussed with the congregation. As there were no amendments, it will be on the agenda for the 12/8 voters' meeting. Jeff Spann from Synod will come in January to assess both church properties and give a recommendation. The covenant between Pastor and LCGS was approved and extended through June 2020. Weekly contributions fluctuate week to week but the yearly comparison is almost the same. The 2020 proposed budget was reviewed and approved to present to the voters'. Pastor visited Elfriede in November and a carol sing at



her home is planned for 12/22. Fellowship is planning a light luncheon for the voters' meeting. Property repairing broken toilets and negotiated the snow plowing agreement for this year. The proposed 2020 council was approved to present to voters': President– Ken Watson; Vice-President– open; Secretary– Brenda Samal; Treasurer– Leonard Lye; Financial Secretary– Lisa Ball-Goodrich; Christian Education– open; Evangelism/Publicity– open; Fellowship– Linda Kapitan; Property– James Learned; Stewardship/Missions– Starr O'Connor; Worship– John Downs. Next council meeting– 12/12 at 6:30pm. (Bring finger foods to celebrate the holiday.)



Claudia Hawley Elfriede Anna
 Rudy Angela Francisco Jim & Mary
 V. Lou K.
 Lisa Sue Amanda Victoria
 Emily Marianne Dottie P. Pam
 Harold Arnold Pat Mike
 Rex Gertrude Howard Barbara K.
 Alex Darryl Alan Ellen
 Abby John Barbara Jessika D.
 James C. Goodrich
 family

Members of Good Shepherd who are homebound

Family and friends whom we name in our hearts

Military personnel

Mission of the church

Congregations of Greater New Haven



John Downs asking for help decorating the church after worship on 12/15.
 ~ Decorate the Christmas tree
 ~ Put candleholders in windows
 ~ Hang wreaths

Congregational Meeting December 8

An end of the year Congregational Meeting has been called for Sunday, December 8. The meeting will convene in the Hall after worship and a brief time for coffee and fellowship.

Two main items are on the agenda for this meeting: a vote on the proposed "Covenant of Intentions" with Christ Lutheran Church of Hamden, and a vote on the proposed 2020 budget for ministry.

A copy of the Covenant is included in this newsletter. It was first presented for congregational review at an informal congregational meeting on November 10 and then distributed via email and mail to those not in attendance at the meeting. Christ Church also will be voting on the Covenant after their December 8 worship service.

DECEMBER CELEBRATIONS

Anniversary

9-Darryl & Linda Johnson 2 years

Birthdays

1-Chuddy Watson
 7-Christopher Knoob
 14-Alyssa Aykroyd
 29-Emily Olson



Baptisms

Jessika Dube, Jonathan Goodrich,
 Leo Goodrich, Barbara Kuslan,
 Christi Sharon

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**

Worship

Worship

10:00am



THE STAFF

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

3680 Whitney Avenue

Hamden CT 06518-1516

FIRST CLASS MAIL