

The Voice of the Good Shepherd

October 2012

(our website good-shepherd.us)

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd is a Christian community empowered by the Holy Spirit to witness to the good news of Jesus Christ through worship and service, in faith and with love, to all people.

From The Pastor

To All the Saints at Good Shepherd,

Earlier this summer several members and I responded to an invitation to attend an “open house” event offered to the community by our neighbors, The Muslim Center of Monmouth County. It was an extremely interesting occasion. Our hosts were very hospitable and welcoming, and went out of their way to answer questions about their religion and its traditions. They also provided the opportunity to appreciate the artwork and traditional clothing associated with the various nationalities represented. And they truly outdid themselves by providing a wide range of wonderful mid-eastern foods.

For me, personally, the most important part of the afternoon was the opportunity to meet their spiritual leader, Imam Reda Shata. Though our conversation (through an interpreter) was brief he made it very clear how happy he was that we had come to the event, and that it was a blessing to know that good neighbors were so close by. We concluded this brief meeting by deciding to meet again for further dialogue on September 15.

Imam Shata is a native of Cairo, Egypt, but lived in Saudi Arabia and Germany before coming to the United States. He first served in New York City area where he was very active in inter-faith programs, and would be featured in a Nobel Prize winning documentary based on his work in the Brooklyn community he served. When asked about he sees to be his main focus in working with his community he explained that he is endeavoring to assist members in adjusting to life in America. There are numerous cultural matters that those coming to this country bring with them that just do not apply here even though they were deemed important in their former societies. And that, to me, is undoubtedly the same kind of challenge all immigrants would have had to deal with as they gradually blended into the melting pot which is the United States.

We also spent some time discussing matters that seemingly are common to all clergy regardless of religious tradition. His schedule is very full: meeting with members concerning personal or family problems, attending meetings, teaching classes, performing ceremonies, preaching and visiting members in need. He is also a scholar and has a demanding schedule of speaking engagements in other parts of the country. As a result he is well known and respected beyond the local community.

Because he had lived in Germany, he was very aware of Martin Luther and how deeply Lutheranism is rooted in German culture. He even remarked how surprised he was to learn how few Lutherans there are in the United States. I then shared a brief history of the church in this country and explained the three major Lutheran bodies which make up American Lutheranism. This he could relate to because Islam itself is identified through three major sects. (The Imam’s community is identified as Summi, the most moderate of the three.)

As we were concluding our meeting I presented the Imam with a copy of The Book of Concord, an 800 page volume containing the basic theological confessional documents of the Lutheran faith. He in turn presented me with a seven volume edition of the most recent English translation of the Koran. We both now have basic resources to better understand and appreciate the heritages that are so important to each of us.

As we concluded the meeting we decided to meet again on December 5 at Good Shepherd Church.

But there is one additional important thing I want to bring to your attention which occurred on Sunday, September 16. Just previous to that date the world was shaken by the tragic events in Libya and other parts of the Middle East where so much hatred for the United States was evident. As I was on my way home and approached the Muslim Center I saw affixed to their sign something that had not been there before: two small American flags. That gesture evidenced to me that the Imam and his community were sending an important signal – we are all Americans and in this together. How true that is, and how fortunate we are to have neighbors who, even though of a different theology, dream and hope for what all people of goodwill yearn: peace, freedom and respect.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Jack

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Council Minutes 9/10/12

In attendance were the following: Garry Westerweller, Steve Miller, Jamie Antonacci, Andy Lichter, Karl Tourjussen, Sharon Oberkehr, Nancy Fitch, Mike Carp, and Pastor Jack
Absent: Andy Mathisen, Tom Tehve, Clem Hergenhan

The meeting was called to order with a quorum declared.

The night's meeting was presented and Andy moved it be accepted. Garry seconded, and the Agenda was unanimously approved.

Pastor Jack opened the meeting with prayer and led us in devotions.

In his discussion about our Mission, Pastor noted that there were new people who attended our Picnic and that a true sense of community was felt. In fact two of the couples who attended noted that Good Shepherd presented itself as a warm, friendly, and welcoming place. Pastor further went on to discuss Matthew's Gospel where he states that "we should go into all the world to make disciples" We need to remember that we are all here with a purpose to spread the Gospel.

Pastor also distributed an article where it states that over 19% of the population, when asked, claimed no religious affiliation. Which bodes the question... How do we put our mission into action in this contemporary setting?

Last month's minutes were approved as submitted

Available committee reports were briefly reviewed and approved by council after which time much of the remaining meeting was spent on property issues and discussing potential ways to grow the congregation.

Social Ministry Report:

Mike Carp presented a comprehensive financial reporting of the state of our Social ministry givings to date. He also presented a list of some concerns regarding our giving with the major one being that in previous years, 75-80% of the giving was completed by June 1st. This year we are way off of that mark.

It was observed that part of the Social Ministry monthly statement is money "off the books" that is solely tracked by Social Ministry (for example, an estimate of congregational giving of food donations to COG). "Off the books" money is not recorded and tracked by Good Shepherd's "Church Windows", and hence is not reported in the monthly treasurer's report. However, the August Treasurer's Report shows 2 different dollar amounts for "Lunch Break". **Steve Miller will contact the Treasurer, to clarify budget entries for "Lunch Break" and to clarify the question mark beside "Thrivent Match In/Out".**

The last treasurer's report was April, 2012. Given the long gap to today's August, 2012 treasurer's report, it is important that the data is correct. In addition, this is the first report with extensive Church Windows financial details. **Steve Miller will ask the finance committee to ensure that the proper "reconciliation" has taken place.**

Mike also stated that we have \$500 in matching funds from Thrivent to distribute. He proposed that this distribution be done as follows: 1/3 or \$166.00 to Lunch Break, 1/3 or \$167.00 to World Hunger's 100 well challenge, and the final 1/3 or \$167.00 to World Hunger.

Garry moved and Andy seconded this motion and it carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Jamie asked if we could add another column, on the report, to reflect the comparative month from the previous year as well.

Steve will add this request to the finance committee/Treasurer along with his action item from above.

Green Faith Certification Presentation

Nancy Fitch presented this program to Council for possible consideration as a mission.

This is an environmental program tailored by the ECLA that helps congregations become more aware and active in environmental issues. Nancy presented this program to gauge the amount of commitment Council and the congregation might be willing to give. More information is available at lutheransrestoringcreation.org.

The council felt that people are not available, at this time, for a full 2 year commitment. However, we should explore the details of the GreenFaith program. We hope to "pick and choose" those elements that might be tackled. Some things could be done by congregation members at home. In addition, Sharon felt the children could be engaged in conservation activities.

Christian Education Report

Sharon reported that VBS had 32 children in attendance. She also reported that we have 16 possible students that will be attending Sunday School.

Christmas Party

The date of the Christmas Party was discussed with the potential date being the second Sunday in December. Garry volunteered to MC the event. **Garry will also look into the possibility of having the party catered.**

Property Report

Jamie discussed the need for having 2 water heaters replaced and will go ahead and have that done.

Discussions as to how to improve the entrance appearance of the Church with the recommendation being set forth to form an improvement committee. Barbara HaHer and Gil Vatter are possibilities to serve on this committee, but we will need a chairperson to spear head the effort.

Jamie proposed a property work day of 10/6/12

Stewardship Report

Karl presented a report outlining the different areas where Good Shepherd advertised and published recent events Karl and Michael Di Piazza (sp) will get together to discuss how to best market and position Good Shepherd.

Old Business

June's action items were discussed and reviewed

Jamie will continue his attempt to put together an Energy Audit

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Next Council Meeting will be on October 8th, 2012

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Courage In Aging

COURAGE IN AGING will meet October 9th at 1:30 in the church library. Our topic will be HAPPINESS.

Please plan on joining Elizabeth and Ruth for the next group and invite your friends to join us. Feel free to.

Call Ruth Elstad with any questions at 732 864-0616

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AROUND THE PARISH

By Gil Vatter

Good Shepherd - The Friendly Church

1. The congregation welcomed *Charlotte Ayn Buerkle* into the fellowship of the Christian faith through the rite of Baptism on Sunday September 2. She is the daughter of *Greta* and *Jason Buerkle* and the sister of *Ella* and *Jason*. We welcome *Charlotte* into the mission we all share.

2. The *Social Ministry Committee* has taken almost 1,100 cans of food to St. Mark's Food Pantry in Keansburg and eight cans of coffee to Lunch Break in Red Bank through August.

Will Rogers said: 1. There are two theories to arguing with a woman. Neither works.

2. The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back into your pocket. (Bill Theune)

3. *Nancy Fitch's* son, *Col. Dan Shrimpton* is with the U.S. Army, stationed at the Pentagon.

4. Before she left for church on Sunday September 2, *Barbara Hafer* spotted SEVEN deer in her back yard. Ever thought about opening a zoo, Barb?

Lena was being interviewed for a job. She was asked, "Do you have any religious views?" "No", she replied, "but, I have some very nice pictures of Oslo."

5. *Pastor Jack* used Luke 18:16, "Let the children come to me and do not try to stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as they", in his Sunday September 2 sermon in connection with *Charlotte Buerkle's* baptism.

6. Thanks and a tip of the Good Shepherd sombrero to *Billy Hickman*, son of Little Chief's *Jo Ann Hickman*, for cleaning the rugs in the sanctuary. Thanks Bill. The carpet looks great.

THEY ASKED WHY I LIKED RETIREMENT:

Among retirees, what is considered formal attire? Tied Shoes!!!

What is the common term for someone who enjoys work and refuses to retire? NUTS!!! (Bill Wehrli)

7. *Pastor Jack* presented a very touching tribute and prayer in memory of all those lost on September 11 before the service began on September 9.

8. Hope you didn't miss *Hannah Oberkehr* lighting the altar candles on Sunday September 9. She did a fine job as acolyte and her sparkly shoes added a distinct touch to her work.

Fritz wore two of his winter jackets when he painted his house last July. The directions on the paint can said, "PUT ON TWO COATS".

9. Thanks and a tip of the Good Shepherd baseball cap to *Debbie Blackburn* and her faithful Fellowship crew for a most enjoyable (and very tasty) parish picnic on Sunday September 9.

10. *Randi Stetz's* brother from Norway, spent some time in New Jersey recently. *Auden*, who is 91, returned to Norway on September 10.

THINGS YOU LEARN FROM CHILDREN: - Super Glue is forever.

- VCR's do not eject PB & J sandwiches, even though TV commercials show they do!

11. *Andy Mathisen* spent the weekend of September 7 - 9 at a Boy Scout camp with the Order of the Arrow, a BSA honor society of which he is a member.

12. *Pastor Jack's* children's sermon on Sunday September 9 included a recipe for ice cream (a cow, a hen and a plant) as well as a recipe for a "great team" to make the world a better place.

One flea to another flea, "Do you want to walk or take a dog?" Aspire before you expire. (Grace Brinkman)

SUPPORT THE CROP WALK

13. Thanks and a tip of the Good Shepherd fez to the great trio that played for us during the parish picnic: *Inez Csulak* (accordian), *Frank Csulak* (trumpet) and *Jim Kelly* (banjo). The trio regaled us with lively music most of us knew and many of us sang right along with them. Thanks so much.

14. The *Ladies Luncheon Group* met at "Off the Hook" in Highlands on September 21. To join the festivities in October, see *Barbara Haher*.

SAS Captain Ole was getting ready to land in Oslo. The control tower asked for his position and he replied, "Why, I'm right here in the front seat, as usual."

15. Happy birthday to *Kirsten and Kurt Mathisen* who turn 20 in October, *John Haher*, who will be 92 and yours truly who becomes 39.

16. *Bunny and Herb Kuhl* are filling up their home again with relatives from Austria. I think it's time for *Herb* to add a pool in the back yard and install a front desk at **CHEZ KUHL**.

My wife thinks I put football before our marriage, even though we just celebrated our eighth season together.

17. *Lou Medici* hit it big during a recent trip to Atlantic City. The win helps make up for all the losses earlier in the year.

18. *Paul Kraus* spent the week of September 9 fishing in the Florida Keys.

Ole - "Sven, why do you always immediately drink the milk you buy in this supermarket?"

Sven - "Because the milk box says, "OPEN HERE."

19. *Kurt Mathisen* will go to Germany on October 6 to enhance his studies of the language. His sister, *Kirsten*, will travel to Chile later as part of her International Studies curriculum.

20. *Ruth and Pastor Jack* spent a week in Vermont, starting September 17 to celebrate their wedding anniversary. Their attempt to visit Vermont last year was interrupted and cancelled by Hurricane Irene. This year the weather was nice and the Elstads had a good week, I'm happy to say.

A small foreign car reduces your problem of finding a parking space while it increases your problem of finding the car. (Bill Wehrli)

21. *Walter Keyl* is reading "Double Cross" about German spies during World War II.

22. *Andy Lichter* has announced that he will retire at the end of the year. Congrats and best wishes.

PERKS OF BEING OVER THE HILL - You can quit trying to hold in your stomach, no matter who walks into the room.

Your investment in health insurance is finally paying off.

23. *Pastor Jack's* sermon on Sunday September 16 urged us all to share our cookies with each other.

24. *Little Chief Learning Center* is now on Facebook.

25. The congregation welcomed *Pastor Fred Schott*, who subbed for Pastor Jack on Sunday September 23. He opened the service with a discussion of "Childishness vs Childlike"

BRING A CAN OF FOOD TO CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY

SEE YOU IN CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY

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FORTY-FIVE YEARS AT GOOD SHEPHERD - PART 5

by Gil Vatter

1992 - Good Shepherd began investigating the need to call a second pastor on a part-time basis. On April 29, the church celebrated its 25th anniversary with Bishop E. Roy Riley preaching the sermon at the worship service. At the luncheon following the service, Pastor George J. Frank was presented with a purse to honor the 25th year of his pastorate. Kevin Davis resigned as organist and choir master to take a full-time position in Vermont and Lois Lehrer returned to take his place.

1993 - Steven Sweet, a student at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, was called by Good Shepherd as a field work student. The Youth Group began to make plans to attend the ELCA Youth Assembly in Atlanta, Georgia in July 1994. The church began a third Sunday morning service during the 9:15 am Sunday Church School time.

1994 - In April the congregation called the Rev. Jean Vargo as Assistant Pastor (part-time) for one year. She was installed in May as Steve Sweet completed his field work assignment. In July, twenty-three young people and advisors from Good Shepherd attended the ELCA Youth Gathering in Atlanta, Georgia. In September, the congregation began an experimental "Contemporary Service" at the 9:15 hour. At the Annual meeting in December, Pastor George J. Frank announced plans to retire in 1995.

1996 - Lois Lehrer resigned as organist and choir master to be with her husband, Col. (Chaplain) Wayne Lehrer, who was retiring from the U.S. Army and accepting a call as pastor from a church in Alexandria, Virginia. She was replaced by Peggy Bendel on May 15. In April Pastor Vargo's one year call was extended. On October 31, Pastor Frank's final Sunday, the congregation participated in a Festival Service followed by a farewell luncheon honoring him. Bishop Riley appointed Pastor Vargo as Interim Pastor, beginning in November.

1997 - In January, Peggy Bendel resigned as organist and choir director and Don Deming, a member of the congregation, became choir director. Warren Gifford became director of the bell choir. On April 28, The Reverend Michael C. Gebhart was called as Pastor of Good Shepherd. Pastor Gebhart had been serving as

Associate Pastor at Faith Lutheran Church in New Providence, N J. for seven years. He arrived at Good Shepherd on July 8 and was installed as pastor on July 15. Carol Henderson was hired as organist on September 25.

1998 - In January, Carol Henderson began a children's choir. The "With One Voice" supplemental hymnal was introduced to the congregation by the choir. A new "Mission Statement" was prepared by the Congregation Council and approved at a special congregation meeting on June 1.

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Spirit to witness to the good news of Jesus
Christ through worship and service, in faith and
with love, to all people.*

A revised Constitution and By-Laws were also approved at the meeting and a "Youth Representative" was added to the membership of the Congregation council. The tenure for Council President was also extended from one year to two consecutive years and an Endowment Fund was created. On July 23 - 27, eleven members of the church's Youth Group attended the ELCA National Youth Gathering, "River of Hope", in New Orleans, Louisiana with Pastor and Mrs. Gebhart serving as advisors. In December, Don Deming resigned as choir master and moved to the Chicago area.

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GOOD SHEPHERD "SPONSORS" FORMING FOR 2013

by Gil Vatter

*"For he alone, whose blood was shed,
Can cure the fever in our blood,
and teach us how to share our bread
And feed the starving multitude."*

(Hymn 729 - "The Church of Christ in Every Age")

Since 2008, members of the Good Shepherd congregation have been helping to support the Kitchen and Food Pantry at St. Mark's Kitchen in Keansburg. The Good Shepherd "Sponsors" program has provided more than \$5,500 to the neighborhood provider of much needed nourishment. This is in addition to the monthly food collection Good Shepherd takes to the St. Mark's Food Pantry.

2013 will be the sixth year the Good Shepherd "Sponsors" program has been sending monthly assistance to St. Mark's and during that period, 21 parish families and two church organizations (Sunday Church School and Women's Luncheon Group) have participated in the program.

We hope that everyone will consider supporting this very worthy project and become a "Sponsor" next year. The list for 2013 will be assembled over the next several months and "the more, the merrier". 2012 was a banner year for the Good Shepherd "Sponsors" program and we want to equal or improve our response next year.

If you want to help feed your hungry neighbors through the St. Mark's Kitchen and Pantry, please mention your interest to Patty or Gil Vatter, Pastor Jack or any member of the Congregation Council.

*"For when I was hungry, you gave me food,
When I was thirsty you gave me something to drink.
I tell you, in so far as you did it to one of the humblest of these brothers of mine,*

You did it to me."
(Matthew - 25:35-40)

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A FEW NOTES FROM THE CHOIR

By Gil Vatter

"We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you....we are an offering."

September 9 - "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" - S. Temple

September 16 - "Within This House of Worship" - L. Larson

September 23 - "I Will Sing My Praise" - Joseph Martin

"Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing."

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Open letter to the Good Shepherd congregation:

September 2012

Dear Friends,

A September 13 headline in the "Asbury Park Press" read, "FOOD BANKS FORCED TO TIGHTEN BELTS : Pantries see spike in demand, drop in supply." A combination of things has made it much more difficult for the 260 Food Banks, Soup Kitchens and Food Pantries in this area to keep pace with the increasing requests for help.

1. Drought in the Midwest means less corn, higher beef prices a shortage of vegetables and resulting price increases.
2. 35% drop in aid from the Department of Agriculture compared to last year means food banks are scrambling for donations in order to buy needed supplies.
3. Even before the drought, food prices were climbing steadily. In 2012, peanut butter has risen 30% in price, canned tuna 15%, eggs 9.2%, and beef 10.8%. Overall, food prices grew 3.7% in 2011, 3.5% in 2012 and are expected to grow another 3% to 4% in 2013.
4. The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties now serves 127,000 people, up 84% from five years ago.

What can we do to help alleviate the situation? How can we help to feed the hungry families in Monmouth County, in the rest of the country and around the world?

1. We continue our support of Saint Mark's Kitchen and Food Pantry with the "St. Mark's Sponsors Program" (see St. Mark's Sponsors article in this issue of the Voice) and with the collection of food which is delivered to Keansburg at the end of each month by members of the Social Ministry Committee. If you are not a part of these programs, begin now to share in either or both of these activities.
2. Send food, coffee or a check to any of the other local organizations which help feed the hungry; Lunch Break, Project Paul, Calico Cat, etc.
3. Support the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, which provides food for all the satellite food banks in the area.

4. Send a check to ELCA World Hunger to help people beyond the United States.

Feeding the World is a daunting task. Feeding the United States alone seems overwhelming. Helping to feed our neighbors in this area of New Jersey, however, can be done, if everyone helps.

In a recent anthem, the Choir offered these words, "May what we've done for others, reveal our love for you." The challenge to feed the hungry is something we as christians, cannot ignore. We have been directed to "feed my sheep" and we have no other choice.

Gil Vatter
Social Ministry Committee

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A THANK YOU from St. Marks

The Kitchen at St. Mark's, Inc.
P.O. Box 193
Keansburg, NJ 07734
August 14, 2012

Rev. John Elstad
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
112 Middletown Road
P.O. Box 452
Holmdel, NJ 07733-0452

Dear Rev. Elstad and Church Members,

Thank you so much for your recent donation of \$238. This gift is helping us make it through a very challenging summer.

Thanks again for your kindness to our neighbors in need.

Sincerely,
Nancy Mester, Co-Director
Doreen Minutella, Co-Director

October 2012

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
	1	2	3	4	5	6
			1pm – Table Talk	7:30pm – choir practice		NJ State Youth Orch 1- 4pm 9am - GS WORK DAY
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9 – Sunday School 10 – Service	7pm Council Meeting	1:30 Courage in Aging	1pm – Table Talk	7:30pm – choir practice		NJ State Youth Orch 1- 4pm
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9 – Sunday School 10 – Service		7:30 – 9:00 Compassionate Friends	1pm – Table Talk	7:30pm – choir practice	12:30 – Ladies Luncheon Group @ Sea Breeze, Hwy 35, Hazlet	NJ State Youth Orch 1- 4pm
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9 – Sunday School 10 – Service			1pm – Table Talk	7:30pm – choir practice		NJ State Youth Orch 1- 4pm
28	29	30	31			
9 – Sunday School 10 – Service			1pm – Table Talk			