

# *The Voice of the Good Shepherd*

**January 2014**

(our website ..... [good-shepherd.us](http://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**

Among all the words sung in the hymns of Christmas Eve, there are six which make clear what is truly referred to as the “ reason for the season”. They are the final words of “ Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”: “*born to give us second birth.*”

I think it is especially timely to consider these six words of good news because we are now looking forward to what hopefully will be a happy new year. We have celebrated the joy and wonder of Christmas and now look forward to what will be unfolding over the next twelve months. Figuratively speaking/ the slate upon which last year had written has been wiped clean and we now have the opportunity to write a new chapter in our life story. Appreciating the possibility of newness can and should be exciting.

But what does “new” mean or imply? Consider what the dictionary associates with this tiny but powerful word: “having never existed before, different, distinguished from what was older, fresh, rejuvenated.” The Bible gives us even more reason to enthusiastically make our new year resolutions with real hope and determination: “*Behold, all things are become new*” II Corinthians 5:17; “*O sing unto the Lord a new song*” Psalm 96:1; “*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.*” Lamentations 3:22. Considering all of the above, it is clear that the future is waiting to unfold in such a way as to renew a weary world. Does that mean there will be no more problems? Absolutely not! But how we chose to deal with those issues can be new. Albert Einstein enforces that statement when he wrote: “*We cannot solve problems by using the same level of thinking we used when we created them or were affected by others.*” What becomes the “new” does not necessarily come easily, but with courage, willingness and determination the old can gradually be replaced with the “new”. Such is at the heart of God’s grace and the comfort of divine forgiveness.

By all means it may prove beneficial to keep in mind the wisdom of the following four insights taken from the literature of the field of recovery where the most desperate of people are seeking the goal regaining wholeness and newness.

### **One day at a time.**

God grant me the serenity to accept things I cannot change  
and the courage to change the things I can.

Just for today, I will try to live through this day only,  
and not to tackle my whole life problem at once.

Just for today, I will be unafraid. Especially I will not be  
afraid to enjoy what is beautiful, and to believe that  
as I give to the world, so the world will give to me.

God bless you all. Enjoy your adventure of finding that which will be new for you in 2014  
Pastor Jack

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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR – ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING - JAN 26  
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CHURCH SERVICE**

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**Council Minutes 12/09/13**

In attendance were the following: Garry Westerweller, Steve Miller, Andy Mathisen, Mike Carp, Tom Tehve, Pastor Jack, and Karl Torjussen

Absent: Sharon Oberkehr, Andy Lichter, Jamie Antonacci

Steve declared a quorum to be present.

The agenda for the evening was reviewed and approved

Pastor led us in devotions reading 3 passages from the Bible

- Advent is the anticipation of new hope and new life
- Called upon the Church to be the light in a new world
- Transformation from Renewal to Repentance

November minutes were unanimously approved with the following changes to be made:

- Change cost of cleaning the Church from \$75.00 per month to per cleaning
- Council and Mutual Ministry, regarding salaries of Church employees should be reversed.

**Garry will change these items in the November minutes and send a copy to Steve for Electronic archival.**

The treasurer’s report was presented. Mike moved and Karl seconded that we accept it. Motion was unanimously carried.

Steve displayed the submitted committee reports for review, which are available on our Website.

During Pastor’s report, Pastor additionally submitted a revised attendance report. Our “core” congregational group is made up of approximately 101 adults.

Discussion then ensued regarding the promotion of our activities in the community and how or if we should promote them. Alternating views of the value of this were discussed. The upgrading of our website was suggested with a push towards finding a way to steer people to it.

As we discussed how to increase attendance, Pastor observed that families with children might be more inclined to attend/join our Church if Sunday School were held at the same time as the service. **Pastor will attempt to get some feedback from two families that recently visited us.**

A suggestion was put forth to offer a condensed version of the minutes for the Voice. **Garry will provide this to Clem starting with these minutes.**

Karl’s report included some data about our recent advertisements in the Patch. Some of the facts follow;

- The Holmdel Patch receives approximately 173,000 “hits” per month
- Our ad was in both the Holmdel and Middletown Patch
- For the month of November our add showed 36,296 times with 34 “clicks” to our website. broken down as follows:
  - Holmdel, 14,713 times with 20 “clicks” to our website
  - Middletown, 21,583 times with 14 “clicks to our website.

**OLD BUSINESS** deferred discussion for another meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- This year, four council members will be leaving
  - Andy Mathisen
  - Andy Lichter
  - Mike Carp
  - Garry Westerweller
- Karl has asked and received positive responses from the following four congregational members to take their place
  - John Dahl
  - Stephanie Dahl
  - Marion Schloemer
  - Lou Medici (1 year only)

Congregational meeting will be scheduled for January 26,2013

The following schedule will be followed prior to the meeting

- January 7<sup>th</sup> – All committee reports should be in to Pat Dunn so she can prepare them for presentation to the congregation at the meeting
- January 10<sup>th</sup> – Written notice of the meeting needs to be sent out to the congregation either by letter or e mail
- January 12<sup>th</sup> – Announcement of meeting should be included in Sunday Service
- January 13<sup>th</sup> – Council will meet at its regular time
- January 19<sup>th</sup> - Announcement of meeting should be included in Sunday Service
- January 26<sup>th</sup> – Congregational Meeting (followed by a brief meeting of new council to elect officers for the coming year)

Mike Carp presented a report outlining that we had received matching funds from Thrivent as follows:

- \$300.00 for Crop Walk
- \$300.00 for Bayshore Lunch

In an effort to maximize matching funds from Thrivent for the Philippine Typhoon Victims, It was suggested that we continue to collect for this relief fund for the remainder of December and try to get matching funds from Thrivent in January. Mike will determine which organization we utilize to distribute these funds.

Steve received a request from a local music teacher to utilize one of our classrooms. This request was denied as the use was deemed as “for profit” and we felt we wanted to minimize our exposure in this area.

Request was made by Steve to make everyone aware NOT TO TRY TO REPROGRAM THE THERMOSTATS!

Pastor noted that Epiphany is the first Sunday in January. He suggested we try to tie in Stewardship with the theme of the Three Wise men bearing gifts. He also suggested we emphasize a different focus each month regarding Stewardship.

We will have temple talks in January with the following speakers scheduled:

- January 5<sup>th</sup> – Pastor Jack
- January 12 – Karl Torjussen
- January 19<sup>th</sup> – Garry Westerweller

We also discussed the next steps for the Narthex and it was suggested that we resurrect the Narthex Improvement Committee to assist us once again.

Adjourn with the Lord’s Prayer.

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**SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN MAKE CHRISTMAS BRIGHT**

by Gil Vatter

On Sunday December 15, the children of the Good Shepherd Sunday School presented their annual Christmas Pageant as a part of the regular 10:00 a.m. communion service. The Pageant traced the familiar story of the birth of Christ as seen through the eyes of children and was enthusiastically received by those in attendance. Mrs. Sharon Oberkehr and the Sunday School staff directed the show, the music and the many costume changes required by the children. The presentation ended with the entire cast singing "Away in a Manger" and the congregation joined in the final two verses of the favorite old Christmas hymn.

The children who participated in the Christmas Pageant included:

- Isabella Antonacci - Innkeeper, Shepherd, Camel
- Katey Howard - Donkey, Star
- Kolby Howard - Joseph, King
- Summer Howard - Mary, Angel
- Morgan McKnight - Innkeeper, Shepherd
- Bella Miller - Sheep Camel
- Hannah Oberkehr - Dove, King
- Leah Oberkehr - Cow, Camel
- Logan Wilgus - Angel, Shepherd
- Tim Wilgus - Caesar Augustus, Innkeeper, King

Following the Pageant, Pastor Elstad introduced four new acolytes, who will assist in future communion services. They included:

- Bella Miller
- Isabella Antonacci
- Katey Howard
- Leah Oberkehr

The congregation thanks all the children and teachers of the Sunday School for a very inspiring introduction to the Christmas season and for their continued contribution to the life of the church.

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**CHURCH GREET'S CHRISTMAS SEASON DURING SNOWSTORM**

by Gil Vatter

Despite low temperatures and driving snow, the Good Shepherd congregation met in Frank Hall on Sunday evening December 8 for fun, fellowship and food, expanding a tradition of many years. Expecting 75 to 80 people or more, bad weather causing terrible driving conditions limited the guest list for the evening to 45 to 50 people. Attendance figures, however, did nothing to restrict the quality of the party nor the level of fun experienced by those who were able to challenge the snow. Debbie Blackburn's Fellowship Committee prepared the hall with bright red tablecloths on each table, including the food table running down the middle of the room, decorated with a flower arrangement made by Barbara Haher.

Our genial master of ceremonies, Garry Westerweller, started the festivities with the reading of his annual Christmas poem, followed by the singing of traditional Christmas carols accompanied by Dick Alberti. In the absence of Pastor Elstad, who was unable to make the trip from Toms River, Gil Vatter offered a prayer of thanks for the catered feast which was about to be served and each table, in turn, visited the row of dishes on the banquet table to select from the tempting ham, chicken, vegetables, salad and many other types of food offered on the serving table.

Following dinner, the Children's Bell Choir, under the direction of Sharon Oberkehr, presented their version of "Ode to Joy", "The First Noel" and "Joy to the World", all of which was received with loud applause by the appreciative audience. Emcee Westerweller then supervised several games for the children, including building a

Christmas tree from red or green plastic cups (the "red team" won by a whisker), a candy cane race and an elf dressing contest. To no ones surprise, every child received a gift.

Each table then was given a copy of the annual and dreaded Good Shepherd Trivia Quiz (written and presented by Garry with malice aforethought). The 2013 version of the "Trivia Quiz" was even more demonic than usual with questions like: "Where is the Christmas Ridge Mountain Range located?" and "What president barred the Christmas tree from being displayed in the White House?" After many moans and groans, one table triumphed with 26 correct answers out of 40 questions. The winners all received a Dunkin' Donuts gift card.

One of the highlights of the evening was the presentation, amidst much applause and lots of laughs, of the coveted, special Good Shepherd Annual Award Certificates by Garry. This year's awards went to: Nancy Fitch - Good Shepherd's "Green Planet" Award; Grace Brinkman - Good Shepherd's "Just for Yuks" Award; Barbara Haher - Good Shepherd's "Let's Do Lunch" Award; Bill Nemicik - Good Shepherd's "Quick Start" Award; Karl Torjussen - Good Shepherd's "Spread the Word" Award and Tom Tehve - Good Shepherd's "Wizard of the Accounts" Award.

The festivities for the evening were concluded with all those in attendance singing a rendition of "Ernie's Song" over the phone to Ernie Brinkman, who was unable to attend the party. The eight verse "salute" to Ernie, composed by Garry Westerweller, included such poetic masterpieces as:

"Ernie the Quick Good shepherd member  
Had the very fastest feet  
And you would soon regret it  
If you blocked his way to eat"

"All of Good Shepherd loves you  
It's really not a mystery  
Why when it comes to good sports  
You'll go down in history"

Thanks for a wonderful evening go to the Fellowship Committee, Dick Alberti, everyone who brought beverages, all those who decorated or set up the room, those who helped clean up the room after the party and, especially, to Garry Westerweller, who did so much, as he does every year, to make the 2013 Good shepherd Christmas party a rousing success.

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**AROUND THE PARISH**

by Gil Vatter

**HAPPY NEW YEAR - WELCOME 2014 -SO LONG 2013**

**GOOD SHEPHERD - THE FRIENDLY CHURCH**

1. The congregation welcomed *Pastor Neil Jagge* on December 1 and 22, while Pastor Jack was away. His homily on the 22nd was "An Offer You Can't Refuse".

2. *The Ladies Luncheon* Group met at the Nauvoo Grill Club in Fair Haven on Friday December 13 for their Christmas get-together. For information about the January lunch, see Barbara Haher.

Ole - "What kind of ice cream do we have?"  
Lena (in a very deep voice) - "Vanilla and chocolate"  
Ole - "Do you have laryngitis?"  
Lena - "No, just vanilla and chocolate." (Grace Brinkman)

3. The Good Shepherd 2013 Christmas party was a smashing success, despite a snow storm. 80 to 90 were expected; 50 to 60 were there.

4. Happy birthday to *Pam Brown, Pat Dunn, Dorothy Groh, Bob Horlacher, Andy Mathisen, Pat Miller, Fred Oberkehr, Ellen Tehve, Bill Theune, Kim Wehrli and Bill Wehrli*. Many happy returns to all.

What ten letter word starts with gas? Give up? AUTOMOBILE. (Bunny Kuhl)

5. Wonderful to see BOTH *Grace and Ernie Brinkman* in church on Sunday December 1.

6. Happy anniversary to *Pam and Al Brown, Lois and George Frank and Karen and Andy Lichter*. Congratulations and many more.

I have learned that a funny joke can change your whole attitude. Also broken cookies have fewer calories. (Bill Wehrli)

7. Thanks and a tip of the Good Shepherd ball cap to the Children's Bell Choir, which continues to surprise and please the congregation with their musical presentations. (*Isabella Anderson, Katey Howard, Summer Howard, Hannah Oberkehr, Leah Oberkehr and Mathew Oberkehr*). Thanks so much guys.

8. Thanks and a tip of the Good Shepherd yarmalke to *Garry Westerweller* who acted as emcee at the Christmas party again this year. Good job, Gar.

Young Ole - "How were your exam questions?"

Young Sven - "They were easy, but I had a little trouble with the answers." (Grace Brinkman)

9. And while I'm tipping the Good Shepherd beret, thanks to *Debbie Blackburn, Sharon Oberkehr and Patty Vatter* for setting up Frank Hall for the Christmas party.

10. And another tip of the Good Shepherd fedora; in December the Social Ministry Committee delivered over 150 cans of food to the *Bayshore Lunch Program* in Keyport, bringing the yearly total to more than 1,800 cans of food, worth over \$1,360, the biggest response in five years. Thanks to all who brought food for BLP in 2013.

I've learned that life isn't fair; so accept it and adjust and I've also learned that sometimes you should just let your heart decide and deal with reality later. (Bill Wehrli)

11. And yet another tip of the Good Shepherd boater to the 18 families and two organizations who contributed to the Bayshore Lunch Program in 2013, to the tune of more than \$2,100, as well as the 10 families and two organizations who have already signed on for the 2014 "Sponsors" program. Between the "Spnsors" and the folks who bring food to church and the Church Council, Good Shepherd has become an important contributor to BLP.

12. It was good to see *Andy Lichter* in church on Sunday December 1 and 8. Andy sang with the choir during his short visit from North Carolins, where he now lives.

What do you get if you cross a Japanese beetle with a rabbit? BUGS BUNNY (Bunny Kuhl)

13. *Miae Park's* postlude on Sunday December 1, Handel's "And the Glory of the Lord" , was greatly appreciated by those of the congregation who stayed seated to hear her play after the service. It wae Advent season.

14. *Pat Miller* sang with the Monmouth Civic Chorus in their concert of Sunday December 8. The Christmas portion of Handel's "Messiah" was among the selections presented by the Chorus. Pat also played the service on Sunday December 29, during Miae's absence. Thanks, Pat.

A trout stopped a herring one day and asked, "Where's your brother?" - He received this rude response: "What am I, my brother's kipper?" (Bill Wehrli)

15. Thanks to all who supported the Calico Cat Christmas Certificate program and thanks to *Nancy Fitch* for spearheading the effort. The Church Council provided a cash contribution of \$410, the Sunday School children made Christmas ornaments for the tree and, all-in-all, Good Shepherd sent contributions of \$1,340 to Calico Cat. Well done.

16. *Kurt Mathisen*, a student at Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania, will study in Heidelberg, Germany from January to the end of July 2014.

A lady wanted to mail a Bible to her son at College. The post-office clerk asked if the package contained anything breakable. "Only the ten commandments", the lady replied.

17. Thanks to *Bunny and Herb Kuhl* who contributed a frozen turkey for BLP.

18. *Jonathan Kim*, Miae Park's son, has been accepted at Carnegie-Mellon in Pittsburgh, where he will study biology.

I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid. He says he can stop any time.

19. *Bob Sislian* is nursing a sore knee. Notice the cane?

20. Congratulations to *Sharon Oberkehr*, the Sunday School staff and all the kids who appeared in the 2013 Sunday School Christmas Pageant. This year's performance was the best ever.

Why do they use sterilized needles for lethal injections? How come you never hear father-in-law jokes? (Bill Wehrli)

21. *Pastor Jack* will present a six part program, "Stress and Your Body" beginning January 8. I think he's trying to tell us something.

22. My annual thanks to *Maureen Bartlett*, who provides coffee after church every Sunday of the year. That's reliability and devotion.

I don't worry about terrorism. I was married twice. (Rudy Giuliani)

23. Thanks and a tip of the Good Shepherd derby to all the adults who prepared the weekly educational events for our children: *Sharon and Fred Oberkehr, Andy Mathisen, Dora Howard, Karen Rajala, and Julia and Debbie Blackburn*. Your work is such an important part of the life of the church. Thanks.

24. *Pat and Steve Miller* will leave the first week of January for a trip to Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand. Bon Voyage.

As he hurtled through space, one thought kept crossing John Glenn's mind, "Every part of this rocket was supplied by the lowest bidder." (Bill Theune)

25. Thanks a lot to every family which donated one or more poinsettia plants for the sanctuary on Christmas. The altar was beautiful on Christmas Eve. Despite snow flurries and very low temperatures, 120 people worshiped at Good Shepherd on Christmas Eve and heard Pastor Elstad 's homily, "The Ineffable Gift Come Alive".

**SEE YOU IN CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY**

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**CALICO CAT 2013 CHRISTMAS CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

Many thanks for your wonderful response to COG's Christmas Program. Your contributions of gift certificates and cash allows COG clients and families to purchase food and gifts for Christmas!!

Good Shepherd Church Council voted to provide a cash contribution of \$410. Our Sunday School children provided Christmas ornaments to encourage you all to also participate in donating gift certificates or checks. On Monday, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>, the Calico Cat and Food Pantry and Cupboard received Good Shepherd's total contribution of \$1340.

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COURAGE IN AGING--will have its next session on January 14, Tuesday at 1:30 in the church library. Please join Elizabeth and Ruth for the next session. Call Ruth Elstad at 732-864-0616 for any questions. All are welcome!

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**CARL KUKASCH DIES AT AGE 57**

Carl R. Kukasch, a former member of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, died on Wednesday December 11, 2013. He was 57 years old. Carl was a long time resident of Holmdel and attended Holmdel schools. He graduated from Monmouth University and was employed in production control.

Born in New York on April 22, 1956, he was the son of Ellen and Herbert Kukasch, long time active members of Good Shepherd Church. He served as Treasurer of the Rutgers Lutheran Campus Ministry. At the time of his death, he was a member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Sommerville, New Jersey.

He was predeceased by his mother and is survived by his father and sister, Loraine Kukasch.

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**A FEW NOTES FROM THE CHOIR**

by Gil Vatter

Lord, use our voices, Lord use our hands, Lord use our lives. We are an offering

December 1 - "When Thou, My Righteous Judge Shall Come" - M. Bedford

December 8 - "Eternal Rose" - D. Lantz

December 15 - "Come Rejoice, Believers" - D. Buxtehude

December 22 - "When God's Time Has Ripened" - A. V. Fedak

December 24 - "Let Our Gladness Know No End" - L. C. d'Aquin

"Be Botn in Us" - R. E. Schram

"Born is Jesus, the Infant King" - J. Roll

"Christmas Melody" - Hand bells - Rachel Mathisen

The choir meets for rehearsal each Thursday evening at 7:30 in the sanctuary. All are welcome.

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**Contributions Update** by Clem Hergenhan

Here's some info from the monthly Treasurer's Report given to Council at their meetings. The General Contributions are used for our yearly budgeted items.

	Nov 2013	YTD 2013	YTD Budget	YTD 2012
General Contributions	10,460	116,288	123,750	123,969

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## The Good Shepherd Christmas Party Poem – by Garry Westerweller

Several Days before Christmas  
Through the wintery mist  
Comes a new Christmas Poem  
With a Good Shepherd's Twist

It's just something I do  
Every year round this time  
I present for your pleasure  
This short, Christmas Rhyme

Not a poem about stockings  
That you hang home with care.  
Just a poem about Christmas  
And the feelings we share

So a warm Christmas welcome  
To the old and the new.  
You're now officially part  
Of our Good Shepherd crew!

We're glad you could be here  
To help us spread cheer.  
And to make this a tradition  
That you'll enjoy every year!

Now normally this is the  
Part of the rhyme.  
Where I pick out a person  
To give a hard time

In the past I've used Ernie.  
Last year it was Clem.  
It is really too easy  
To use them again.

This year I'll be different.  
I'll do the good Christian thing.  
I'll remember it's Christmas  
And no mud will I sling!

I'll be a good Lutheran  
And keep the good mood.  
And like the rest of you Lutherans  
I'll concentrate on the food.

So many food choices  
From which you can choose.  
Each dish just gets better  
You really can't lose.

So we'll start off with prayer  
Then all get in line.  
We'll share fellowship, fun,  
Then will sit down and dine.

And when dinner is over  
I thought, just for kicks.  
I'd hand out our quiz  
For you guessed it, year 6!

Review all the questions  
Do the best you are able.  
And the prize will be given  
To the one, winning table.

Then while you are playing  
I'll call out the kid's names.  
So they too can play in  
some cool Christmas games

And before the nights over  
And we all head for home.  
I'll get back to the basics  
Of Mr. Clement Moore's poem

On Dasher on Dancer  
On Pastor, on Mike,  
On Tom, Karl and Sharon  
And the rest of you like

On Andy, on Jamie  
On Garry and Steve  
Go out into the world  
And spread what you believe

The meaning of Christmas  
The cause for our mirth  
The love that God gave us  
Through Jesus' Birth

Let's all leave this place  
And go out of our way  
To ensure that a stranger  
Enjoys a great day!

Merry Christmas to all  
Let's rejoice and have fun.  
And as Tiny Tim said  
God Bless us, everyone!

## **Ernie's Song as Sung at the Christmas Party (to the tune of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer)**

You know Debbie and Grace from our good congregation,  
Maureen who sets up Sunday's coffee station.  
But do you recall.... The most famous member of all?

Ernie the Quick Good Shepherd member  
Had the very fastest feet.  
And you would soon regret it  
If you blocked his way to eat.

All the Good Shepherd members  
Knew when it was Coffee time  
Ernie would somehow wind up  
Always being first in line

Then one Christmas Party night  
Garry wrote a poem  
Ernie it's becoming clear  
Why we pick on you most every year.

You're the one guy we know who'll take it  
You know that we just kid in fun  
You may show up with this walker,  
But you're not fooling anyone.

### **Verse 2 (everyone sings)**

**Ernie the Quick Good Shepherd member  
Had the very fastest feet.  
And you would soon regret it  
If you blocked his way to eat.**

**All the Good Shepherd members  
Knew when it was Coffee time  
Ernie would somehow wind up  
Always being first in line**

**Then one Christmas Party night  
Garry wrote a poem  
Ernie it's becoming clear  
Why we pick on you most every year.**

**All of Good Shepherd loves you  
It's really not a mystery  
Why when it comes to good sports  
You'll go down in History.**

# January 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
				7:30 - Choir Practice		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9- Sunday School 10 - Service				7:30 - Choir Practice	12:30-Ladies Luncheon Grp	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9- Sunday School 10 - Service	7-Council Meeting	1:30 - Courage in Aging		7:30 - Choir Practice		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9- Sunday School 10 - Service		7-Thrivent Chapter Mtg 7:30- Compassionate Friends		7:30 - Choir Practice		
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
9- Sunday School 10 - Service Congregation Mtg after Service				7:30 - Choir Practice		
2	3	NOTES				