



The Good Shepherd's Voice

January 2025

Newsletter from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and School



How can I be happy when the future is so uncertain?

"Blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear."
Matthew 13:16

Every generation talks about the "good ole days." As we embark on a new year, many people would be more than happy to go back to the "good ole days" of years ago. Today, stock market swoons, foreclosures, and unemployment are all too common. Grumbling and complaining occur as many people find it difficult to provide for their personal needs. These things, along with other personal struggles, may make us long for the "good ole days."

Amidst all the turmoil, even when nest eggs crack and portfolios decline, we can still move forward with certainty that all of our needs will be met. Why? Because Jesus met all of our true needs and Jesus promises to provide for our futures!

Jesus came into the world! Christians are enabled to rejoice every day with the kind of joy that only Jesus provides. He blesses us with the gracious and powerful things He accomplished in our place: Jesus lived a perfect life as our substitute; Jesus died on the cross to win forgiveness of sins for each of us; Jesus won the victory over sin, death, and the devil by His triumphant resurrection from the grave; Jesus freely gave it all away to us!

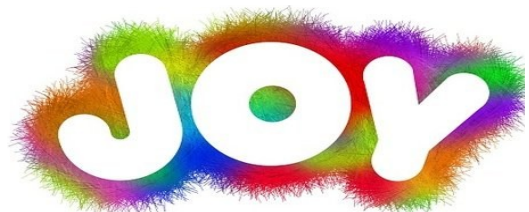
God tells us about all these blessings in the Bible. In His written Word, God's plan for our future is laid out, and we are informed about how Jesus fulfilled God's saving will for us.

Jesus said, "Blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear." Our Savior teaches us that we rejoice as He enables us to trust God's love, as it is God describes Himself on the pages of the Bible.

Jesus' work is not limited to the spans of generations; it is a gift to all people for all time. God's faithfulness to His world of people has remained the one constant since Christ created all things.

Trusting in His love, we overcome concerns we may have due to personal circumstances. We truly rejoice because we see in the Bible how Jesus gave His life for us and how Jesus is now preparing for us an eternal home in heaven, the place of unbridled joy.

God invites everyone to hear and trust the good news of Jesus, to celebrate the wonderful message of salvation. With that confidence, we do not have to look back to the "good ole days" for a sense of happiness but rather look forward to the eternal happiness that awaits us in heaven—all because of God's great love for us in Jesus!





WE'VE ORDERED THE NEW ORGAN!

January Birthdays

Jan 1 - Kathy Gear

Jan 15 - Larry Beyer

Jan 21 - Aubrie Przybylski

Jan 3 - Noah Erwin

Shelly Eberlein

Jan 22 - Amanda Irwin

Jan 6 - Owen Eberlein

Savi Weigel

Jan 25 - Elijah Schuler

Marcia Klicko

Jan 17 - Kathy Lee

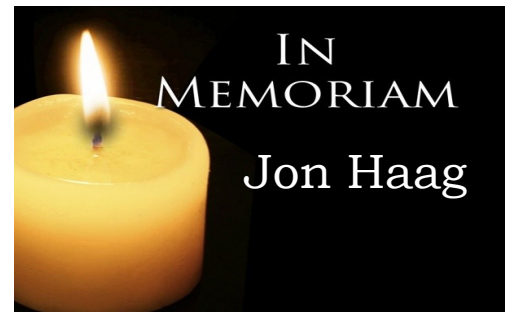
Jan 7 - Kent Zastava

Jan 18 - Mike Irwin

Jan 8 - Emma Kay

January Wedding Anniversaries

Jan 27—David and Lynda Perron (32)



Thank you for all the information that was submitted for possible inclusion in our newsletter this month. Wow! We had a lot to report and had to re-arrange and modify a lot.

But thankfully all the information is here for you. Blessings!



Newsletter Distribution Going Digital: March 2025

Did you receive your December and January Good Shepherd newsletters in your email? If not, we might not have your email address or our email version might have landed in your spam folder. So that you can continue reading and learning about our ministries and activities here at Good Shepherd, please share your email information with the church office office@1goodshepherd.org. Starting in March, print editions will no longer be mass distributed via USPS.



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Christmas Outreach

- THANK YOU for personally handing out the Christmas flyer to family and friends.
- THANK YOU for viewing the QR code on your smartphone to check out the landing page and sharing the QR code with family and friends!
- THANK YOU for interacting with the Christmas ad when it appeared on our church's Facebook news feed, liking it, commenting on & sharing it!
- THANK YOU for inviting family and friends to our Christmas worship services!



Cabin Fever

Join us Saturday, January 11

at 5 pm!

Dinner at 5:30 pm

Sloppy Joes, hot dogs, chips, water provided!

Please bring a dish to pass and
your favorite game!

Gifts from the Household and Personal Hygiene Items Drive

Many of the families in Adams and Wood County have a need for household cleaning and paper products, as well as hygiene items. The Ladies group is sponsoring a drive from **February 2 -16, 2025**.



We have applied for Thrivent Action Team Dollars to help with our drive. We will supply a more detailed list of needed items in the January bulletins.

While you are out shopping perhaps pick up an extra item and look for the collection boxes in early February. We so appreciate any donations you can provide!





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Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran
Church & School
 www.1goodshepherd.org
 715-325-3355
 10611 State Hwy. 13 S. Wis. Rapids



"News from Your School"

January 2025

Email: 1goodshepherdschool@gmail.com

Happy New Year!

As we start a new year, we look back at the amazing memories we made in the past year (See pictures below). Thanks to all who came and supported the kids of our school and congregation during the Christmas Eve Service!



The new year also reminds us to look forward to all the exciting new blessings from Jesus that will come our way in the year 2025. As we do so, we are also looking forward to a new school year that is some months

away. Believe it or not, now is the time when school registration begins. Any member families or current students who wish to be part of our school family next year are encouraged to register during January so they save their spot before we open it up more to the public on our website and Facebook. However, if you know someone who is not part of our school or church family currently who might be interested in our school, please share the information with them!



<https://forms.gle/Ws6MRvqekFpBJQZs5>



This link and the QR code beside it are the registration form we will be using this year. If you would like to register for our school, please complete this digital form.

To view our School Google Calendar, go to <https://shorturl.at/voct4>.

Events for this month:

- Christmas Break: December 25-Jan. 5, School resumes on Jan. 6
- End of Quarter 2: Wednesday, January 15
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day: Monday, January 20 (We DO have school this day.)
- Report Card Conferences: Tuesday and Wednesday, January 21-22
- Principal Conference: Saturday, January 25

As always, you can also support our school through the Amazon Wishlist:
https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/NK08ICXTWUIX?ref=wl_share



*May God grant you a Happy
New Year! See you in church!
Miss Cook and Mrs. Irwin*

From Christian Life Resources:

Sometimes words are used to obscure reality. Terminating the life of an unborn child is called "abortion." Soon, advocates of abortion rights sold the public on "choice." The mantra was "My Body, My Choice," and you would not know they were advocating for the right to kill an unborn child.

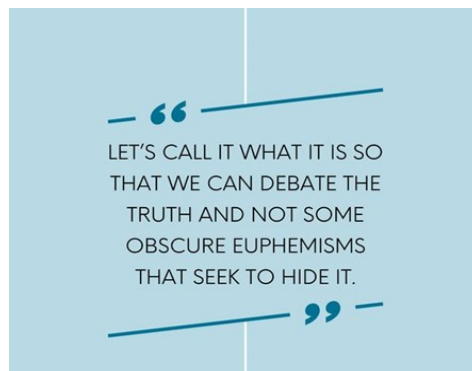
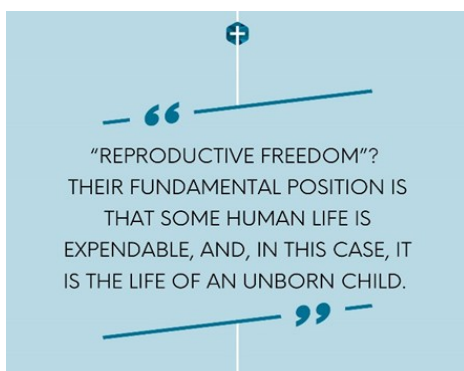
Now even "Choice" is being replaced by the moniker, "Reproductive Freedom."

Early advocates of abortion rights were instructed by marketing professionals that they should not sell the public on the right to have an abortion. But you can sell the public on the right to make a choice.

In a Tower of Babel type of empowerment euphoria, advocates want to convince you that you are not killing a child or even making such a choice. You are simply exercising your reproductive freedom.

None of these talks about what abortion really is – the ending of an unborn child's life.

Scripture calls us to speak the truth (Ephesians 5:15). The fundamental position behind "reproductive freedom" is that some human life is expendable, and, in this case, it is the life of an unborn child. Let's call it what it is so that we can debate the truth and not some obscure euphemisms that seek to hide it.



WE'VE ORDERED THE NEW ORGAN!

The December donations to the Organ Fund has made it possible to place the order for the new organ. It has to be built, but we hope to have it in house around February. Thank you to all who gave so generously!



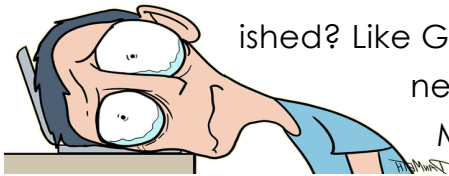
WE'VE ORDERED THE NEW ORGAN!

CHECKING THE LIST TWICE?



There's a fairy tale song that some sang during the past few weeks of December. It threatened children to be good with an implication of *or else*. Time to sweat it out because, after all, Santa checked his naughty and nice list—twice. And here it is now, the new year. If those Santa tales are true this big smiling elf is already hard at work chalking up my naughties-list.

"Santa-type-gifts" have steel-carbon-fibre strings tightly tied to my behavior. Such gifts are rewards, like a pat on a back by my friend, or an *A* on my report card by my teacher, or a bonus from my boss on my paycheck. One can see how many wrongly think that good behavior can expect a tit-for-tat gift from God. Maybe not a vacation, but maybe He could work it so I could stretch the paycheck to cover some groceries?



And when difficulties and struggles come, do I feel slighted? Ignored? Punished? Like God is pulling up a dump-truck of coal, stocking up early for my next Christmastime. Is that my bumper year starting January 1? My friends, that is *not* the rhythm of God's heart-beat.

Want to know the truth? All the hard work to be good, I mean really good, good from the inside thought to the outside activity, all of the good has already been done. Jesus did it all for us. And Jesus did it right.

Jesus was without sin (holy) all the time, never messed up, never said the wrong thing at the wrong time. He was, and is, holy in every way. I am not. Neither are you. Neither is your mom & dad, your spouse, your children, your next door neighbor, your boss, your employee, your teacher, your class.... All of our behaviors are a never-ending list that is a mix of very nasty-and-grim naughties.



You get it? That spotlight, the truth, glares into the sin-darkened heart. Here's the icky part. God says only holy souls, those without sin, are allowed to enter His holy heaven, with Him who is praised as thrice-holy by holy angels. Our Father in heaven knows you and me all too well. Holiness fiercely rejects our bad attitudes. Our Holy Creator must destroy all sin and rebellion. So the Father promised to do just that and crush the evil that stains our souls and ruined His perfect creation.

This, by the way, is why deep inside we still get kind of nervous in God's presence. All people, by nature, are doomed to no-fun, despairing eternity because our sins locked us out of heaven. The only thing that gave human the soul-calming peace we crave happened about 2000 years back.

It was a surprising public broadcast in the skies over Bethlehem quadrant, not by drones, but by the Lord's army angels. They could hardly stay in formation as they eagerly spilled out of heaven's gates to give the Lord God glory.





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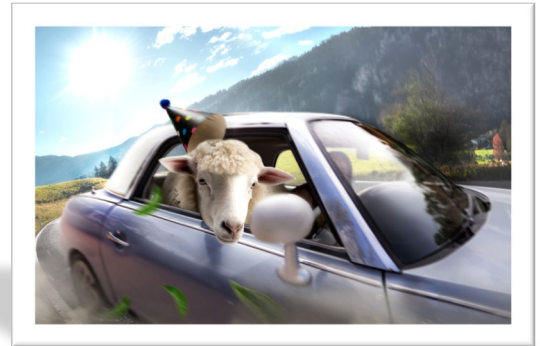
God designed and delivered the only Way to save souls-Himself. The Lord did this without our input or action, without our consent or approval. The Lord did this just display who He really is: merciful and kind! Advent and Christmas gave us extra times to review how solid, sure and safe are all souls who trust God's Word. God designed salvation, from Jesus Christ's promised birth, to His betrayal and execution, to His resurrection and ascension. God then declared and finally delivered the Way of salvation.

The Holy Spirit with His Word has convinced *me* that it was for *mysins* Jesus suffered and died, for *mysins* He rose. He wants me to know *mysins*, *my* personal overwhelming deadly sins, are all freely forgiven. No strings attached!

As that sinks in, I have to catch my breath. Because of what Jesus did for me, I get to be on **God's A-list. Not just on Sundays, but all the time while I walk through life. And LIFE itself is also His gift.**

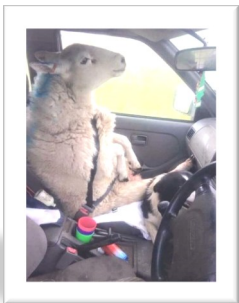
God's A-List is *not* a naughty or nice list.

God's A-List stands for "**Accepted**". Jesus sought me, found me, forgave me, worked it all out for me. He strapped me in, seated right next to Him, and we are headed to His Home in heaven, now my Home also by faith in Him.



I am fully accepted as God's own sheep through what Jesus has done for me. All with no strings attached! Wow! What a great gift! How in the world do I say thank you to what sounds too good to be true? Jesus is my chauffeur through life, on my way to His Father's mansions!

The Holy Spirit uses the Bible to point us to the Son, the Messiah, our Savior. The Father point us to the Lamb's book of life in heaven. There, by faith, our names written and placed in the throne room of grace of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh. The shepherds heard heaven's joy shouted at them and me. They could not keep the good news to themselves at all.



So I think to myself, how is that echoing in my house *after* Christmas? Do *I* know Jesus is The Virgin-born Babe of Bethlehem? Do *I* actually trust the Crucified and Risen Christ as *my* go-to Helper, Friend, Confidant and Savior? Do people hear heaven's "**GLORIA!**" in *my* voice? Can the wise men's eagerness to worship be seen in *my worship preparations*? In other words, am *I* still awed by the Christ of Christmas as He takes me back Home?

STAY AWED IN CHRIST, THE REAL CHRISTMAS

God sent His letter. He addressed, delivered, opened and read it for you. He put Himself right out there. So, as the Lord lets us go into the year ahead, let's take a little more time hang out with Him. Maybe pour ourselves a cup of cocoa as we keep reading His letter, the Bible. From my family to you and yours, driving into the next year, happy reading!

Alive in Jesus!

Pastor T



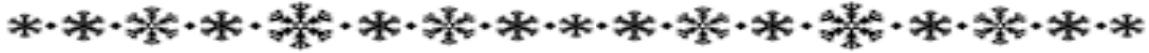


WE'VE ORDERED THE NEW ORGAN!



Women's Bible Study

Kathy Lee will be leading a women's Bible study starting on Thursday, January 16th. Because it gets dark so early, the class will start at 2:00 pm. It is a four part study based on Philippians called "Rejoice in the Lord." Sure, bring a friend! You do not need to purchase a book, but you will need to use a Bible. Contact Kathy for more info on this joyful study.

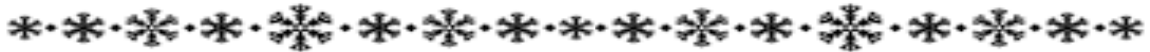


CAMP PHILLIP - Summer Camp Registration opens **February 1st!!** From Sunshine and Specialty Camps to Fledglings and Pee-Wees, Camp Phillip has summer camp programs for every child. You can learn more at www.campphillip.com.



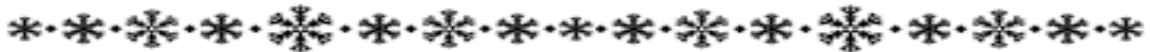
Good Shepherd is a corporation congregation. That means members of Good Shepherd receive a **10% discount on summer camp** and field trips. Each congregation may also select two adult male members to serve as representatives at our annual meetings.

The Ladies Group also offers a **\$50 registration fee reimbursement**. Contact Kathy Lee (treasurer of the Ladies Group) if you have registered your child for camp. You can receive \$50 for each child you register.



Thank You from the Ladies Group for the great support with their Cookie Walk. AND

Thanks to the Ladies Group for all the great treats!



Parish Nurse Notes

Happy New Year! Or maybe you are not feeling happy??? This month I would like to talk about wintertime and mental health. When I tried to Google "winter and mental health", most of the articles focused on seasonal affective disorder (SAD.) I will share some of the suggestions that might help boost your mental health this winter season. But first I will start with some promises and suggestions from the Bible that are useful throughout the year.

To avoid feeling alone and isolated, read Isaiah 41:10. "**I AM with you**, so do not be afraid. I AM your God, so **do not be upset**. I will make you strong and I will help you. My powerful right hand will keep you safe." (EASY)

To avoid feeling anxious, read 1 Peter 5:7. "**Cast all your anxiety on Him**, because He cares for you." (EHV) Or read Philippians 4:6. "**Do not worry about anything**. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray, always give thanks." (ICB)



WE'VE ORDERED THE NEW ORGAN!

If you are grieving, read Psalm 34:18. "The Lord is **close to the brokenhearted**. He saves those whose spirits have been crushed." (EHV)

Maybe you are not feeling alone, anxious, or full of grief. But you may be prone to **SAD** and the depression associated with it. **Seasonal Affective Disorder** is a form of depression which typically occurs during the fall and winter months due to a decrease in social interaction, lower levels of sunlight, and increased levels of melatonin. Here are some general suggestions for maintaining your mental health during the winter months. They are useful when dealing with SAD.

Stay active and engage in regular exercise. When possible, exercise outdoors close to mid-day. Some days your activity might need to take place indoors. That is okay, just stay active. Set a goal that works for you, even if that goal is 10 minutes of daily dancing.

Connect with others, whether in person or virtually. Social connectedness positively impacts physical and mental health. Reach out to someone every day.

Engage in self-care, this may include getting adequate sleep, eating healthily, and drinking enough water. Yes, even in winter you need water – just think of the dry air in heated homes.

Daily take time to meditate on God and His word instead of focusing on worldly distractions. Check out Philippians 4:8 for things to focus your mind on. Check out our new women's Bible Study group "**REJOICE IN THE LORD**" beginning January 16th. We meet here at Good Shepherd on Thursdays at 2pm.

Get outside. Improve your mood with fresh air and sunshine. Bundle up and get outside every day. Consider activities that make it fun to get outdoors - sledding, stargazing, or hiking in a local park.

Do something for someone else. When you are feeling down, acts of service can be uplifting. Consider checking in on a neighbor, or performing an act of random kindness. Maybe check out volunteering for a cause like Dime and Dollar Thrift Store in Wisconsin Rapids. Volunteers there enjoy each other's company. They help support our community and the Gospel ministries of our area WELS congregations. Talk with Cindy Loechler 608-219-9457 for ways to help.



Try something new. When you've been in the same routine for a longer stretch of time, your brain benefits from doing something out of the ordinary. You could join the technology team here at church. Or you could check out a community "Strong-bodies" class, It's held on Tuesdays & Thursdays at 9:00am at Nekoosa Area Community Center. Talk with Bobbette at 715-323-8070 for more information.



Get enough light during the day. If you can't get outside, hang out in sunny rooms. If your living or working space is dark, consider getting a light therapy lamp.

Get enough Vitamin D3. In northern climates, like Wisconsin, the sun's rays are not strong enough to give us the vitamin D we need. Talk with your health care provider about supplements. The daily recommendation in the U.S. is 1,000 international units. Mushrooms and fish are also a natural source of vitamin D.

I hope these suggestions help you this winter.

*May your 2025 be blessed with physical, **mental**, and spiritual health,*

Kathy Lee, RN



WE'VE ORDERED THE NEW ORGAN!

Financial Secretary Report Thru November 2024

November Attendance Summary for current and previous years

	2021	2022	2023	2024
# weeks	4	4	4	4
Average Sunday	70	97	81	93
Avg Sunday On-Line	72	58	54	42
Total Attendance	681	756	713	635
Average Mid-Week	57	22	29	12
Avg Midweek On-line	58	17	15	12
Total Avg Weekly:	178	189	178	159

On Line numbers = # of computers watching X 1.65

Planned Giving & Income through November for current and previous Fiscal Years

Planned Giving & Other Income	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Unified Budget Envelopes	\$108,949.95	\$131,698.55	\$135,264.65	\$105,857.32
On-line Offerings	15,716.50	19,754.38	14,175.00	25,439.00
Spec Services Envelopes	917.00	870.00	1,415.00	175.00
Initial Offering Envelopes	5.00	5.00	20.00	5.00
Plate	1,689.02	1,943.39	2,820.55	2,360.16
Other Income/Gifts	3,373.89	2,076.53	138.00	118.00
Bank Account Interest	18.96	148.39	175.35	328.80
Actual YTD Total	\$130,670.32	\$156,496.24	\$154,008.55	\$134,283.28
Actual YTD vs Prior YTD	-----	\$25,825.92	(\$2,487.69)	(\$19,725.27)
Planned YTD Total	\$147,352.50	\$147,757.50	\$155,512.50	\$161,916.67
Changed Plan vs Prior Yr	-----	\$405.00	\$7,755.00	\$6,404.17
Actual YTD vs Plan YTD	(\$16,682.18)	\$8,738.74	(\$1,503.95)	(\$27,633.39)

Planned Giving & Other Income for FY 2024/25 as of November 30, 2024

Planned Giving & Other Income	November	Fiscal YTD	**References**
Unified Budget Envelopes	\$18,639.69	\$105,857.32	Fiscal Yr Giving Plan \$388,600
On-line Offerings	6,753.00	25,439.00	
Spec Services Envelopes	165.00	175.00	Monthly Giving Plan \$32,383
Initial Offering Envelopes	0.00	5.00	
Plate	430.89	2,360.16	% of FY Complete (5 of 12 mos) 41.7%
Other Income/Gifts	53.00	118.00	
Bank Account Interest	75.67	328.80	% of FY Plan Given 34.6%
TOTAL GIVEN	\$26,117.25	\$134,283.28	
Less PayPal fees (note 1)	\$25,914.25	\$133,511.83	

Notes:

- 1) PayPal Fee: \$203 YTD: \$771.45
- 2) Organ contributions: Organ Fund - \$18,413, Memorials - \$21,134. Total - \$39,547
- 3) A claim settlement of \$53,268.36 was received from Church Mutual for roof hail damages

PLEASE NOTE THE SIGNIFICANT SHORTFALL OF CONTRIBUTIONS!



Financial Secretary

Alan Shepard







GOOD SHEPHERD EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

10611 Highway 13 South, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

Pastors: John T. Melke & Paul A. Tullberg
 Educator/Principal: Hannah E. Cook
 ECM Teacher/Director: Amanda Irwin

Web Site: goodshepherd.org
 Phone: 715-325-3355
 Email: goodshepherdchurch@gmail.com

January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Scrip Orders Due Jan. 5 Scrip Orders Delivered Jan. 12	Watch Services Sunday's on Solarus Channel 3 or Spectrum Ch 985 at 2:00 pm		 1	2 No Worship Service	3	4
9:00 AM Worship Service w/Communion 10:15 AM Bible Class and Sunday School	6 11:00 AM Coffee w/Christ 1:00 PM Pastors Circuit Mtg 6:30 PM Choir	7 9:00 AM Elders 6:30 PM Evangelism	8 6:30 Confirmation	9 6:30 PM Worship Service	10	11 5:00 PM Cabin Fever
12 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:15 AM Bible Class and Sunday School	13 11:00 AM Coffee w/Christ 2:00 PM Ladies Group 6:30 PM Choir	14 6:30 PM Church Council	15 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 Confirmation	16 2 PM Philipians Bible Study 6:30 PM Worship Service	17	18
19 9:00 AM Worship Service and Sunday School Qrtly Congregational Mtg	20 11:00 AM Coffee w/Christ 6:30 PM Choir	21	22 6:30 Confirmation	23 2 PM Philipians Bible Study 6:30 PM Worship Service w/Communion	24	25
26 9:00 AM Worship Service w/Communion 10:15 AM Bible Class and Sunday School	27 11:00 AM Coffee w/Christ 6:30 PM Choir	28 4:30 PM Board of Ed	29 6:30 Confirmation	30 2 PM Philipians Bible Study 6:30 PM Worship Service w/Communion	31	
						



Worship Schedule
Sunday Worship Service: 9:00 am
Bible Class: 10:15 am
Thursday Worship: 6:30 pm

Or Current Resident

Come and See! Go and Tell!
Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church
and School—WELS
10611 Highway 13 South, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
Phone: 715-325-3355
www.GOODSHEPHERD.ORG
Pastor Paul A. Tullberg | Pastor John T. Melke
Principal Hannah E. Cook

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