



The Good Shepherd's Voice

February 2025

Newsletter from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and School



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

"Blessed are the poor in spirit." Matthew 5:3

The hand is out. The face is pleading. In this case, the need is real. When one has run out of options and is desperate for help, begging seems the only choice.

It's hard to imagine that one who is forced to beg would be happy about it. Being so poor in physical things can make life very hard.

Yet when it comes to a person's spiritual condition, God says that it is very important to be a beggar. In fact, true happiness only comes when you see that you are a beggar.

Do you see yourself as a spiritual beggar? However wealthy we might be financially, it is very tempting to feel that we—just naturally—have what we need in our spiritual bank account. We think that striving to be a good person has to count for something before God. We may not be perfect, but we reason that surely God doesn't expect us to be.

Have you ever tried to reassure yourself with thoughts like those? And yet have you had lingering fears, wondering whether you've really done enough good? Does guilt for things you have done wrong keep coming back, robbing you of happiness?

Rather than trying to shout louder than those frightening voices, hear God speak a hard truth: "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23)

When I disobey God's perfect will in my life, I deserve to die eternally in hell. For God demands that everyone be perfect—that we never sin, even once.

This makes it quite clear that by nature we are all spiritually bankrupt. Yet Jesus says, "Blessed (happy) are the poor in spirit." But isn't being spiritually poor—even bankrupt—reason to be sad and afraid?

Yes. But this is also the moment to hear God tell us a most amazing truth from his Word: "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

When we see that we have nothing to give God, we are so grateful that God has lavished us with spiritual riches. Jesus freely came to earth to take all of our sin on himself. He became poor—he humbled himself to become the victim of the greatest suffering, paying on the cross the penalty of sin that we owed. He now assures you, "Your sins are forgiven." With sins forgiven and the eternal kingdom of heaven yours because of Jesus, you are truly rich!

It is a blessing to be a poor beggar before God because, in Jesus, we are filled with the riches of salvation

February Birthdays

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1) Allen Leach | 18) Wendy Goerke | David Hoppe |
| 2) Sara Kay | 19) Stephen Huber | 24) Ellie Timm |
| 5) Kim Shepard | 20) Alan Shepard | Joslyn Timm |
| 9) Diane Schroeder | Everest Skibbba | 26) Joan Rhein |
| 12) Karen Heiman | 21) Rusty Roe | 28) Larry Kellinger |
| Matt Ives | 22) Amanda Henriksen | Jim Krahn |
| Kathy Jesko | 23) Kaelyn Green | |

February Wedding Anniversaries

- 4) Roger and Karen Deglow (58)
19) Luanne and Richard Burdick (26)



Newsletter Distribution Going Digital: March 2025

The Good Shepherd's Voice, the print editions of our newsletter, will no longer be mass distributed via USPS. Please share your email information with the church office office@1goodshepherd.org so that you can continue to receive your own copy of the newsletter delivered to your email inbox every month. You can pick up a physical copy if you would like that we provide guests at God's House. You can also find the latest edition of The Good Shepherd's Voice on our web site under the heading *What's New?* <https://1goodshepherd.org/newsletter/>



Dear Father, in Your beautiful book of Psalm, You give us this wonderful promise, "From everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear Him, and His righteousness with their children's children." Bless us with Your Word and wisdom. Bless us to be faithful and patient, full of compassion to others. Move us to be for others like You are for us! We are so grateful to You, Lord God. We pray in Your name, Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

New Member Brunch

Sunday, March 2nd

following the church service

Sign-up sheet is located in the narthex



**Join us for The Riverkings hockey game
on Friday, February 21st at 7 pm at the
South Wood County Rec Center 2711 16th St S**

\$6.00 per ticket

sign-up sheet is located in the narthex

Open skate after the game

Questions? Contact

Chris Rhein 715-621-6474



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!





"News from Your School"

February 2025

Email: 1goodshepherdschool@gmail.com

Sharing the Word and Trusting in God

For the last month, the first through fifth grade students have been learning about the Exodus and the Israelites 40 year wandering through the desert. While God continued to bless his people and provide for them, the continually doubted Him and complained that what they had wasn't enough. We are often the same way, worried about whether our school is big enough, our church has enough money, our health will stay stable, or any plethora of other things.

God repeatedly reminded us and the Israelites through the book of Exodus that He can always provide what we need and always will, we just need to turn to Him in prayer. Complaining rarely worked for the Israelites and had negative consequences, and the same is true for us. When these worries assail you, pray to God and trust that He is working on our side for our needs to make sure the Word of God is shared.

God also invites us to join him in sharing this Word, and our school is a GREAT way to do this. We have spaces in our school for more students from 3K-5th grade. If you know of someone who could use a good education grounded in God's Word, please share the registration link below with them, or encourage them to reach out to Miss Cook or Mrs. Irwin to learn more and tour our school.



<https://forms.gle/Ws6MRvgekFpBJQZs5>



This link and the QR code beside it are the registration form we will be using this year. Share this link or QR code with anyone you know who are interested in a Christ-centered education for their child.

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

Events for this month:

Kids in the Kitchen: February 8, Kids start cooking at 4 pm, dinner is at 6 pm

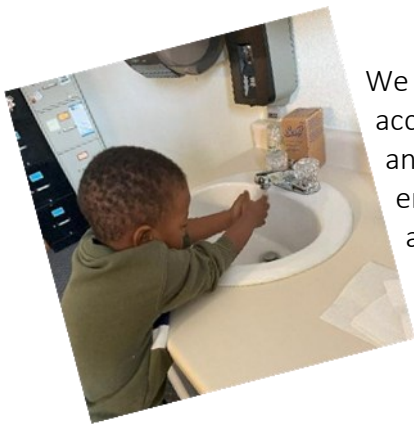
Teachers' Conference: February 20-21, NO SCHOOL these days due to the conference

Grades 1-5 sing for Education Sunday: February 23 at the 9 am worship service

Spirit Week: February 24-28 after the kick off with Education Sunday

A special thank you to all who have donated books, a classroom keyboard and a gym mat to our school. The children have been using them and are really enjoying them! Here is the link and QR code to the wishlist: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/NK08ICXTWUIX?ref=wl_share





Exciting Preschool Update!

We are so excited about the new door installed in our classroom which gives us access to a sink. We often have messy projects and activities in our classroom, and now we can wash our hands without going to the bathroom with a teacher. If you have an opportunity, take a peek in the early childhood classroom and check it out. A special thank you to Bruce and Linda Mohns, Dan and Dylan Deitz, and Mike Irwin for the door.

Thanks to all! See you in church!

Miss Cook and Mrs. Irwin

Kids in the Kitchen! Valentine Dinner

Saturday, February 8

Kids (ages 4-12) arrive at 4pm to help cook a meal for their guests.

Guests arrive at 6pm to enjoy the feast.

Sign up sheet is located in the narthex. Please bring a friend.

There is also an opportunity to donate necessary food items.



New Volunteer Opportunity

An effort is underway to reduce Good Shepherd's planned expenses for the 2025/2026 year and forward. One way to accomplish this is to have Good Shepherd members clean 1 day on an alternating weekly basis with the cleaning service. With 16 volunteers (2 teams of 2 people per cleaning day) this would result in a cleaning responsibility of about once every two months. **Please consider helping with this effort.** A sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex.



CAMP PHILLIP - Summer Camp Registration opens February 1st!!

From Sonshine 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.



One command talks openly about the most private and intimate matters of life. Wow! What was God thinking? He was thinking of our good and how often we sinners do not think.

Gals, remember who gave you your sexuality. Be aware that your sexuality can lead you to sinfully harm yourself and others.

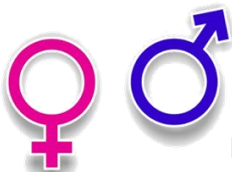
Guys, remember God, who gave you your sexuality. Be aware that your sexual desires can make you brain-dead and lead you into great shame as you harm yourself and others. The 6th commandment seems to be one of the most challenging for parents to

discuss with their children. In my unscientific studies, there's a lot of porn out there and all of God's people need to be armed against it.

Porn is a twisted and sick serial killer that trashes God's good gifts of sex and marriage. Pornography ruins bodies, souls, relationships, businesses and entire cultures. Yet I get it. I get why so many of us, even those of us who follow Jesus, would be drawn to porn in our day. Through the increase of knowledge this particular sin, along with gossip, is easy-peasy. Just like gossipy griping hurts people's reputation, porn does the same. Both are suggested as cool and exciting on our small handheld screens, our big movie screens, our books and conversations. Satanic thinking claims it is just a venting of personal stress and harms no one.



Addiction studies reveal that five of the most tempting times to fall into self-destructive behaviors are when we feel **Hungry Angry Lonely Tired Bored**. Do you know anyone who feels like that these days? Those are just five of the emotional and physical factors that might lead to the twisted thinking that says porn is ok.



In addition to those common five physical and emotional twists and turns of life, add the wicked manipulations of hell that are at work. We each have a dark part of our hearts. It lusts for short-term pleasure of selfishness. The devil serves it up and the sinful world dishes it out. The sinful world uses and abuses people for greed (to make a dollar off of them) or control (to make another person a slave) The sinful world does not care about the cost to an individual or the relationships they have. The devil is a master manipulator.

Jesus calls that demon a liar-murder. Satan is all about tricking people into thinking that porn is somehow ok. After all, there are four lies that Satan hisses: 1) *no one has to know about this sin* and 2) *no one has to get hurt by this sin* 3) *This sin is normal* 4) *Everybody else is ok with this sin*. Perhaps these lies lead many people, even Spirit-filled people, to click where we shouldn't, to dwell on things that God forbids, to speak what they should not speak, to joke in unseemly ways. Which begs the big question for a follower of Jesus—**How do Christians fight back against porn?** Here are **5 steps** that have blessed many people:

1. **Get Real About the Wreckage**—Porn *seems* so innocent. Like Eve we are tempted to think: *It's just one fruit of one tree. No one will know. I heard that it is good for me.* We all are nature-damaged and twisted by that poisonous act of defiance. And still people say, no one will know. It's just me and one screen, one stress release, a harmless way to pass the time, good way explore sexual desires.

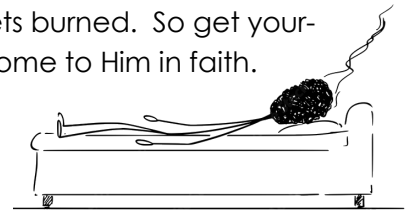
But porn is not innocent nor is it good. God sees clearly and Bible histories get real about the wreckage that every sexual sin causes. Souls are lost to intense pain, loneliness and utter darkness as they turn their backs on Jesus Christ. Let's take off the fool's-filter. Look at porn as it really is: an Enemy, poised to poison you, all the while

pretending to be your good friend. Spouses are crushed when they discover the betrayal. Trust and marriages are broken. Children and teens are trafficked as a business. Porn needs a continual supply to meet the depraved demand. Participants are damaged, imprisoned, fined or die.



2. **Run Back to God's Grace**—Porn may be hotter than you thought. In the Bible, God likens lust to a person who scoops hot, burning coals onto himself. You are the one who gets burned. So get yourself to Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. Jesus comforts and soothes all who come to Him in faith. Run back to Jesus. Christ crucified and risen is the Friend of sinners.

Think about His Word. Have you read Romans 8:1? or 1 John 1:8,9? or Romans 5:8? or Jeremiah 31:34? As you lean on God, continue to be amazed at God's grace for those who fall into sin, even sexual sin. Lean on the strong arms of your heavenly Father. You are His child through faith in your Savior Jesus. Gospel message of God's full and free forgiveness wants to give you real rest. You are not the wicked things that you have done in the past. You are whom God says you are: His own son, His own daughter, cleansed by Jesus in His sight. Even when you are **hungry, angry, lonely, tired, or bored**.



3. **Get Rid of Porn**—Cut off your access to porn. Delete apps, pics, and vids that cause you to stumble. Be ruthlessly honest about the triggers that lead you down a road that has no U-turns. Don't install anything on your devices that would not benefit your soul. Yes, I know. There is no foolproof way to get away from porn in our digital age. But Jesus has provided some help. The Holy Spirit can make use those guardian-apps. Such gate-keepers give time to snap out of a porn-pursuing fog. Make sure porn is way more than a click away for the moments when you may feel **hungry, angry, lonely, tired, or bored**.

4. **Stay Accountable to Others**—Nothing helps our self-control as much as the good news of God's love and God's good people who love us. Tell someone about your struggles. Confess to a trusted friend. Be brutally honest about when/how/how often you fall into the use of porn. The sinful thinking that got you into porn is not godly and not healthy. That sinful unhealthy thinking will rot your relationships like leprosy. So boldly ask for their prayers, encouragement, and love. Ask friends to remind you of Jesus' patient love for sinful people (you will need it). Trust the Bible's path to restored good health and generous mercies of Jesus. (James 5:16; Proverbs 28:13).

5. **Get Ready for Battle**—Craft your own battle plan. Memorize a Bible passage and use it like a sword against the ideas of the wicked one. Screen-save a picture of Jesus to remind you of Jesus who is better than the instant sinful unhealthy pleasures of porn. Fight against porn that is trying to trip you up. Fight one day at a time. This is war. So, go to war! Fight the good fight.

As you fight you remember you join with thousands of Christians who also struggle with harmful addictions. They pray for you even as you pray for them. The Spirit washes believers every moment in the lifeblood of God's Son, Jesus Christ, crucified and risen.

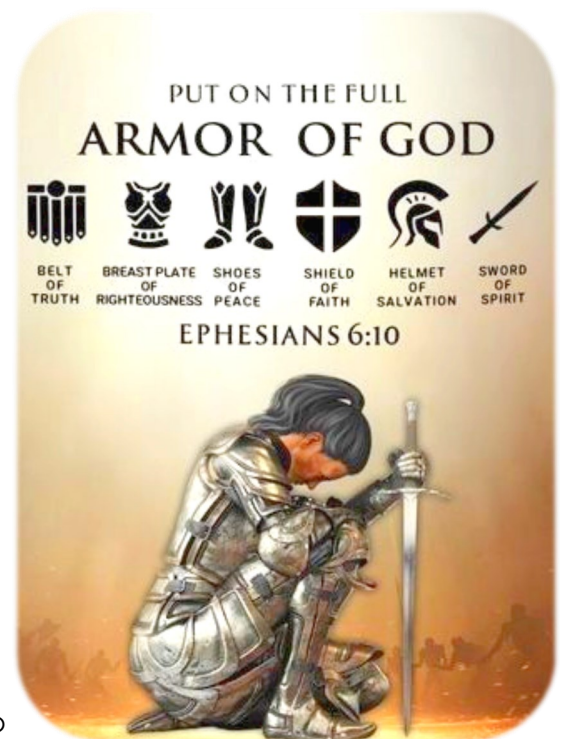
If those 5 steps above work for you today, repeat them tomorrow. And if they don't "work," repeat them anyway! They may help keep you closer to Jesus and His Word, His gracious kindness and mercies. Nothing matters more than that. Nothing.

Resisting sexual immorality has always been a challenge. It has been a challenge from the time of Samson and the Judges, through King David and King Ahab, down to our present day! So, keep your eyes on Jesus. Jesus is the only true God, Jesus is up to the challenge of every battle we have against sin in our lives. With the Word of God, let's keep asking the Lord to cleanse the leprosy of porn that is rotting our culture and even trying to influence and harm those in God's family of faith.

Talk to our Father, look to His Son, and ask for His Spirit. Trust His gracious power for you. From my family to your and yours, happy trusting!

alive in Jesus!

Pastor T



Parish Nurse Notes

Have you bought eggs recently? If you did, you may have been shocked by the high price. Perhaps the store from which you made the purchase has limited the amount you could purchase. What is to blame? It is an imbalance between supply and demand. The demand has stayed steady, while the supply has decreased. The decrease is due to the significant outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in egg laying chickens.

What is avian influenza (bird flu)?

Avian influenza is also known as avian flu or bird flu. It is a type of viral infection. It is widespread in wild birds and poultry but does have the potential to infect other animals and humans. Avian influenza refers to the disease caused by infection with **avian** influenza Type A viruses. These viruses naturally spread among wild waterfowl worldwide and can infect domestic poultry and other bird and animal species.

Avian influenza is not the same as the seasonal flu. Avian influenza spreads mostly among wild birds, whereas seasonal flu spreads mostly among humans with predictable peaks during the year. Since the avian flu viruses do not commonly infect humans, there is little or no immune protection against them in the human population. People mainly become infected with the avian flu viruses through direct contact with infected birds and poultry (live or dead), their droppings or contaminated environments.

All the devastating flu pandemics of the last century were caused by viruses that came from birds, such as Spanish flu in 1918, Asian flu in 1957, and Hong Kong flu in 1968. Before COVID-19, the most severe pandemic in recent history was the 1918 influenza virus, often called "the Spanish Flu." That virus infected 500 million people (one-third of the world population) and caused 50 million deaths worldwide. It happened when the avian influenza virus mutated. The mutation allowed the virus to spread from human to human.

The current outbreak of avian flu in the United States

The first human case of avian flu in the U.S. was confirmed in April 2024. By December 2024, 66 total human cases had been confirmed in 10 states. On January 6, 2025, the U.S. reported its first human death from the avian flu. The source of the infection was a backyard flock and wild birds.

How do humans become infected with avian flu?

Infected birds shed avian influenza viruses through their saliva, mucous and feces. Other animals infected with avian influenza viruses may have virus present in respiratory secretions, different organs, blood, or in other body fluids, including animal milk. Human infections with avian influenza viruses can happen when virus gets into a person's eyes, nose or mouth, or is inhaled. This can happen when virus is in the air (in droplets, small aerosol particles, or possibly dust) and deposits on the mucus membranes of the eyes or a person breathes it in, or possibly when a person touches something contaminated by viruses and then touches their mouth, eyes or nose.

Can avian flu be transmitted through food?

Technically, yes, avian flu can be transmitted through food. Several cats have become ill and even died as a result of consuming raw milk contaminated with H5N1 (one of the virus subtypes.) However, no instances of avian flu being transmitted to people via food or drinks have been reported during the U.S.'s current outbreak. You are fine to keep eating eggs, dairy, and poultry as long as you cook them properly. It is not safe to drink unpasteurized (raw) milk. General precautions should always be taken when handling any raw meat, including raw eggs, to avoid possibly spreading germs. These measures include:

- Washing hands and surfaces before and after food preparation.
- Avoiding using the same utensils on raw meat as on other foods, even cooked meat.
- Cooking raw meat thoroughly.

Should you remove your bird feeder?

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology states the following: "There has been widespread transmission of avian flu to wild bird species including waterfowl and raptors. The virus has also been found in mammals that prey on dead birds. However, transmission to songbirds and other typical feeder visitors has been low (about 3% of all cases reported in wild birds), although this may change with increased testing or changes to the virus. That means there is currently a **low risk of an outbreak among wild songbirds**, and **no official recommendation to take down feeders unless you also keep domestic poultry**, according to the National Wildlife Disease Program. We do always recommend that you clean birdfeeders and birdbaths regularly as a way to keep many kinds of diseases at bay."

So, at this time your risk of avian flu is low. There are many online resources with information if you want to learn more.

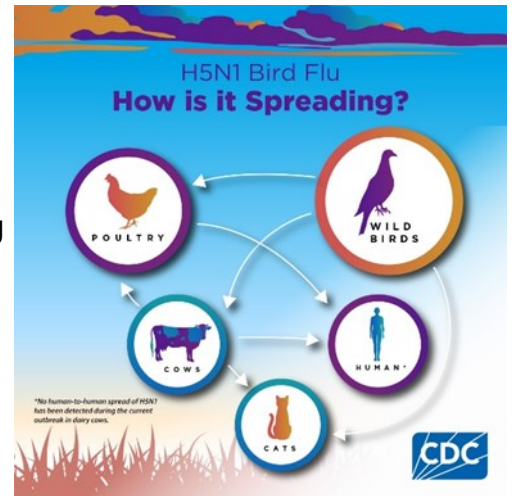
Kathy Lee, RMT



Good Shepherd Branded Clothing

Order forms are available for T-Shirts, Polo Shirts and Hooded Sweatshirts that have the Good Shepherd Logo.

Samples and forms are available in the narthex.
Please return orders by February 16th



Financial Secretary Report Thru December 2024

December Attendance Summary for current and previous years

	2021	2022	2023	2024
# weeks	4	4	5	5
Average Sunday	66	80	85	89
Avg Sunday On-Line	85	60	57	51
Total Attendance	862	934	1257	1237
Average Mid-Week	67	53	73	76
Avg Midweek On-line	63	38	37	32
Total Avg Weekly:	286	233	251	247

On Line numbers = # of computers watching X 1.65

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

Planned Giving & Other Income	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Unified Budget Envelopes	\$127,461.42	\$150,997.70	\$159,435.15	\$134,436.61
On-line Offerings	20,533.50	22,647.38	16,579.00	31,139.00
Spec Services Envelopes	4,277.00	5,580.00	12,360.00	7,097.00
Initial Offering Envelopes	5.00	50.00	20.00	75.00
Plate	2,677.27	2,243.39	4,730.55	3,052.16
Other Income/Gifts	3,508.89	2,076.53	140.00	510.00
Bank Account Interest	19.54	163.04	213.88	452.32
Actual YTD Total	\$158,482.62	\$183,758.04	\$193,478.58	\$176,762.09
Actual YTD vs Prior YTD	-----	\$25,275.42	\$9,720.54	(\$16,716.49)
Planned YTD Total	\$176,823.00	\$177,309.00	\$186,615.00	\$194,300.00
Changed Plan vs Prior Yr	-----	\$486.00	\$9,306.00	\$7,685.00
Actual YTD vs Plan YTD	(\$18,340.38)	\$6,449.04	\$6,863.58	(\$17,537.91)

Planned Giving & Other Income for FY 2024/25 as of December 31, 2024

Planned Giving & Other Income	December	Fiscal YTD	**References**
Unified Budget Envelopes	\$28,679.29	\$134,436.61	Fiscal Yr Giving Plan \$388,600
On-line Offerings	5,700.00	31,139.00	
Spec Services Envelopes	6,922.00	7,097.00	Monthly Giving Plan \$32,383
Initial Offering Envelopes	70.00	75.00	
Plate	692.00	3,052.16	% of FY Complete (6 of 12 mos) 50.0%
Other Income/Gifts	392.00	510.00	
Bank Account Interest	123.52	452.32	% of FY Plan Given 45.5%
TOTAL GIVEN	\$42,578.81	\$176,762.09	
Less PayPal fees (note 1)	\$42,405.26	\$175,817.09	

Notes:

- 1) PayPal Fee: \$173.55 YTD: \$945
- 2) Organ contributions Total - \$47,198
- 3) \$559 given to Property - Maintenance & Repair for Cleaning contract
- 4) In-Kind: \$1,396.44 YTD: \$1,640.64

PLEASE NOTE THE SIGNIFICANT SHORTFALL OF CONTRIBUTIONS!

Financial Secretary



Alan Shepard



Look for the special letter entitled "Handling Our Church Finances" that was enclosed in the contribution statements!



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: 1goodshepherd.org
 Phone: 715-325-3355
 Email: 1goodshepherdchurch@gmail.com

February 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Scrip Orders Due Feb. 2 Scrip Orders Delivered Feb. 9	Watch Services Sunday's on Solarus Channel 3 or Spectrum Ch 985 at 2:00 pm					
2 9:00 AM Worship Service w/Communion 10:15 AM Bible Class and Sunday School	3 11:00 AM Coffee w/Christ 1:00 PM Pastors Circuit Mtg 6:30 PM Choir	7:30 AM Elders 6:30 PM Evangelism	5 6:30 Confirmation	6 2 PM Philippians Bible Study 6:30 PM Worship Service		8 6:00 PM Kids in the Kitchen Valentine Dinner
9 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:15 AM Bible Class and Sunday School	10 11:00 AM Coffee w/Christ 2:00 PM Ladies Group 6:30 PM Choir	6:30 PM Church Council	12 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 Confirmation	13 2 PM Philippians Bible Study 6:30 PM Worship Service	14 Happy Valentines DAY	15
16 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:15 AM Bible Class and Sunday School Clothing Order Due	17 11:00 AM Coffee w/Christ 6:30 PM Choir		19 6:30 Confirmation	20 2 PM Philippians Bible Stud 6:30 PM Worship Service w/Communion	21 7:00 PM RIVERINGS	22
23 9:00 AM Worship Service w/Communion 10:15 AM Bible Class and Sunday School	24 11:00 AM Coffee w/Christ 6:30 PM Choir	4:30 PM Bd of Ed	26 6:30 Confirmation	27 2 PM Philippians Bible Study 6:30 PM Worship Service w/Communion	28	





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.lgoodshepherd.org
 Pastor Paul A. Tullberg | Pastor John T. Melke
 Principal Hannah E. Cook

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