

JANUARY 2021

# Shepherd's Voice



The monthly parish newsletter of  
**GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH**

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE...**

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down  
from heaven,  
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the  
Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius  
Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance  
with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living  
and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver  
of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son  
who with the Father and the Son is wor-  
shipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic  
Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the for-  
giveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## **FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY**

There's an old saying about preparation—expect the un-expected. As we have finally crossed the finish line of 2020 and entered into 2021, I'm not sure I could have said with any degree of certainty on January 1, 2020 that the year would turn out the way it did.

But now, that year is behind us and we can look ahead. On the world stage, we see inoculations for the COVID-19 infection coming to fruition. Closer to home, we look with cautious optimism that perhaps by Spring or Summer, any American who wishes to be vaccinated will be able to do so.

I personally look forward to seeing more and more of our beloved church family returning to the pews. I also look forward to a day when I can look out upon the flock from the pulpit and see the expressions on the faces of the people. Let us continue to remain steadfast in our prayers for a continuing and quick solution to this dreaded pan-  
demic.

But let me also take a moment to point to something good that has come from 2020. As we enter 2021, we do so having learned to take advantage of something that was at our disposal for many years, but for which we did not act upon as a church. That is an online video pres-  
ence.

Since March 2021, when it became painfully obvious that we would have to literally prevent people from coming to church to worship in person, we went to work at Good Shepherd Church to provide an online alternative.

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Since reopening the doors of the church in June 2020 to all who wish to worship in person, we have continued to live-stream our Sunday morning 10:00 AM service. We have additionally continued to live-stream Midday Prayer twice a week at 12:15 PM and the Service of Compline each Friday night at 9:00 PM. Except for the reality of the discomfort placed upon us by the pandemic and resulting shut down of society, we likely never would have made this leap to streaming worship.

Now, I fully understand that virtual worship is by no means a replacement for being together as a church family, but I am thankful that we have this technology at our disposal and I assure you, I see no reason that we should be shying away from it. In fact, I can only see us expanding how we use this tool even as we seek to return to a level of normal gathering throughout a post-vaccine 2021. Let us continue to thank God for what He has provided us and continue to seek His will for all that He is calling us to be at Good Shepherd Church.

Until next month, let your light shine!

*Fr. Randall M. Graf, Pastor*



## SERVICES SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY 2021

**Sunday, January 3 @ 8:30AM & 10:00 AM**—Sunday morning Holy Eucharist

**Wednesday, January 6 @ 6:30 PM**—Feast of the Epiphany

**Friday, January 8 @ 9:00 PM**—Office of Compline (online only)

**Sunday, January 10 @ 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM**—Sunday morning Holy Eucharist

**Tuesday, January 12 @ 10:00 AM**—Women's Guild Holy Eucharist (but EVERYBODY is invited!)

**Tuesday, January 12 @ 12:15 PM**—Midday Prayer (online only)

**Wednesday, January 13 @ 12:15 PM**—Midday Prayer (online only)

**Friday, January 15 @ 9:00 PM**—Office of Compline (online only)

**Sunday, January 17 @ 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM**—Sunday morning Holy Eucharist

**Tuesday, January 19 @ 12:15 PM**—Midday Prayer (online only)

**Wednesday, January 20 @ 12:15 PM**—Midday Prayer (online only)

**Friday, January 22 @ 9:00 PM**—Office of Compline (online only)

**Sunday, January 24 @ 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM**—Sunday morning Holy Eucharist

**Tuesday, January 26 @ 12:15 PM**—Midday Prayer (online only)

**Wednesday, January 27 @ 12:15 PM**—Midday Prayer (online only)

**Friday, January 22 @ 9:00 PM**—Office of Compline (online only)

**Sunday, January 31 @ 10:00 AM**—Sunday morning Holy Eucharist (Annual meeting after service)

**PLEASE NOTE:** We will only hold ONE service on Sunday, January 31 and this will be at 10:00 AM. This is so that we can smoothly move directly from worship into our annual congregational meeting.

As a reminder, all services are held in-person unless otherwise noted as "online only" and all in-person services require mask and appropriate social distancing. In addition to being offered in-person, our Sunday morning Holy Eucharist at 10:00 AM is also live-streamed. Our YouTube channel is located at [www.YouTube.com/GoodShepherdMet](http://www.YouTube.com/GoodShepherdMet).

## FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Dear Good Shepherd Church,

The December calendar was full. Our people push forward to be the church: "worship, teach, and fellowship". After nine months of COVID-19, we could only hope these plans would not be dashed, as so much has been.

December 3, The First Sunday of Advent: As council president, I sat in on the Christian Ed meeting where they planned their strategy to re-start Sunday School and nurse. Their plan is awesome. They seem inspired to use the new curriculum and format (Sunday school lesson before service, supplemented by craft oriented Children's Church for the youngest kids, with emphasis on training up our grade schoolers to learn to worship and participate in the service). The kickoff date has had to be postponed, but our teachers are poised and ready to go.



December 12 was the Priestly Ordination of our pastor, Father Randall Graf. He was anointed as a priest in the Anglican Church of North America, Western Gulf Coast Diocese. Despite the virus's attempts to stop this, it was a beautiful service. We were honored to have the Bishop and five of his Priests attend.

Now our pastor has a new title, Father! I think I can get used to this. I have learned the Lord often renamed his people for His purposes. So, let us all honor the Lord and call his servant Father Randy or Padre.

Several people told me they enjoyed the Live Nativity. It was a was a nice event. It was casual and thrown together with what we had. Rebecca, Matthew, and "chubby cheeks" Blain Booth were lovely as our Holy Family. Father Graf read from the Gospel of Luke. The little angels collected around the newborn babe, the tall angel announced the birth to the shepherds, who came to worship the babe, then the wise men came from the East. The personalities of the angels, shepherds, and wisemen in their play acting made it really personal. Then we sang Jingle Bells to Silent Night. Thanks, Rinda! Thanks, play actors! Thanks, Womens' Guild for the cookies. Perfect!

The Christmas Cash Raffle was supported by the whole church. I really admire Mrs. Sandi Graci for her smart ideas, but mostly her big heart. She wanted to do something in honor of she and Carmel at Christmas. They loved Christmas. They were married at Christmas time. Carmel was in training to be a Santa (not the real Santa). She thought that this year, to bless one person with a significant cash gift would be something. And you, the church, embraced the concept, to bless someone.

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Thank you again, Ms. Sandi, for donating the \$1000 cash price from Graci Real Estate and Appraisal Service, L.L.C. This raised \$2500 for the church.

And the winner is.... *Father Randall Graf!* Father Randy was humble, a little embarrassed, and speechless...to be the winner, but if the Lord wanted to give him an "Atta-Boy", Amen!

Looking forward there are two things to mention. 1) Pledge Cards. We have received few pledge cards. This will make budgeting a big guess. If you need a pledge card, please ask and we'll get you one. When all else fails, call. 2) The Annual Meeting has been scheduled for January 31<sup>st</sup>. There will only be a 10:00 service that day. Be prepared to discuss and or vote on going forward with the ACNA.

These are the highlights of Council news.

Have a Happy New Year with our newborn King,

Love your Council President,

**Margaret Aucoin**



## NOTES FROM RINDA

As we settle into the year 2021, I believe that one of the most important concepts for us is unity. In 1940, Brother Roger founded a community of faith in a small town in eastern France. His aim was to share with the people his beliefs and to let them know that he cared for them. Eighty years later, "The Community of Taize" consists of about 100 men, Protestant and Catholic, living in community. Some of the brothers live a monastic lifestyle while others leave to make their homes among the poor around the world.

Singing is important to the community, and, fitting their lifestyle, the songs are simple and repetitive. Harmonizing and singing rounds help to instill the messages of the songs.

Recently I have been playing one of these melodies during the preparation of our Lord's Table for the Eucharist. The text is "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." The simple text and harmony brings a feeling of peace, harmony, and unity. Let us strive for this Christian unity and understanding in our community of faith at Good Shepherd.



**Rinda Coleman**  
**GSC Music Director**

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE

The Christian Education Board has been meeting to determine the best time to resume Sunday School and nursery. Due to the number of COVID cases in our area, our initial plans for an Advent relaunch were postponed, as were our plans for a first of the year relaunch. At this time, we think it's best to wait until just before Lent to reexamine the situation with an eye toward an after Mardi Gras relaunch if numbers are going in the right direction and the vaccine has made suitable inroads into the population.

When we resume classes there will be several exciting changes to our program. Please see the list below:

1. Sunday School will now take place from **9:00-9:45 on Sunday mornings**. The students will be separated by grade level and taught by the following teachers:
  - PK4 - Kindergarten - Mrs. Rinda
  - 1st & 2nd grade - Mrs. Debbie
  - 3rd & 4th grade - Mrs. Renee
  - 5th & 6th grade - Mr. Bob
  - 7th grade and up - Mrs. Kelly
2. We do not have the availability to offer nursery during this Sunday School time. However, the nursery room will be available to any parent who wishes to use it for a younger sibling while the older ones are in Sunday School.
3. Our curriculum will be lectionary-based and follow the teachings that are being used each Sunday in worship. Each week's lesson includes a take home sheet for the students to discuss the lesson with parents. The beauty of this is that all of us, regardless of age, will be learning the same Scripture lessons each week and this will also afford the chance for families to continue discussing the lessons after church and into the week!
4. Our 10:00 worship service will offer a "**Children's Church**" for students in PK4 through 4th grade. This will be taught by Mrs. Heidi and follow the lectionary readings, as well.
5. **Nursery** will be available during the 10:00 AM service for infants through PK3. We are asking each parent to volunteer to be placed on a rotating schedule to watch the nursery children. Anyone from our church family who is interested in volunteering for the nursery will be very much appreciated. Please call or email me to be placed on the rotation. My contact information can be found below.
6. All children who are in the Sunday School age group (PK4 and up) will be expected to continue wearing a mask and continue practicing social distancing and other health promoting behaviors for as long as federal, state, local, and diocesan authorities ask us to remain compliant with health guidelines. In accordance with guidelines, Nursery aged children, at this time, are not required to fulfill the mask mandate.

Please keep our Christian Education program in your prayers. We are striving to provide meaningful lessons to all the children of Good Shepherd Church.

### **Renee Graf**

Christian Education Director  
504-723-2226 | rafg70@gmail.com

## MEN'S CLUB NEWS

I am canceling our Men's Club Meeting scheduled for Monday, January 11, 2021, for two reasons.

First, we really do not have any new information to discuss that we have not already covered at our last meeting.

Second, the COVID – 19 cases in our area are extremely high and I just think it is a good idea if we put off having a Men's Club meeting till the spring.

A reminder that if you have not yet paid your 2021 Men's Club dues, please remit \$25 by cash or check to our treasurer, Don Peterson.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to give me a call or e-mail me.

**D.J. Estopinal**  
**GSC MC President**



## WOMEN'S GUILD NEWS

The first meeting of the new year of the GSC Women's Guild will take place on Tuesday, January 12 at 10:00 AM. It will begin with a worship service in our sanctuary. We look forward to having you with us!

**Barbara Mehrrens**  
**GSC WG President**



## ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

As per our congregation's by-laws we have scheduled our annual meeting for **January 31<sup>th</sup>** after the 10:00 AM worship service. This meeting should not take too long, but it is important that we have a quorum, so please make every effort to attend.



Those leaders submitting **annual reports should e-mail them to Reverend Graf by January 12<sup>th</sup>** so they can be organized and distributed before the meeting.

Because of the annual meeting, we will only hold ONE WORSHIP SERVICE on Sunday, January 31 and this will be at 10:00 AM. We are canceling the 8:30 AM service and encouraging everyone to attend the 10:00 AM service so that we can easily transition from worship into our annual meeting at the conclusion of worship.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

A reminder that you may submit a name or cause to be entered on to the Good Shepherd Church prayer list by completing a prayer card found in the pews and placing the card in the offering plate. Please note that the computer program used to track our prayer listings places a time limit on entries. If a name or cause that was included on the list is no longer listed and you would like it to be, simply complete another prayer card. Likewise, if you would like to update a prayer request and have it removed from the list before it automatically cycles off by reaching its time limit, this too can be done using the pew prayer cards.



## PLEDGING TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH

The mission and ministry of Good Shepherd Church can only happen because her members lend support in the form of time, talent, and financial gifts. If you have not yet completed and turned in your 2021 Pledge Card, please do so. This data is used to help our Budget and Finance Committee create the budget that will be presented at the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 31, 2021. Completing a Pledge Card greatly enhances the accuracy of our budget and your continued generosity greatly enhances our Good Shepherd's ability to continue to minister to her members and reach new people with the love of God through Christ our Lord.

As a reminder, a few parishioners have not yet picked up their 2021 offering envelopes. The remaining envelopes are arranged alphabetically in the narthex of the church.



## SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS AND REMEMBRANCES

A reminder that each Sunday affords an opportunity to honor, remember, and celebrate people and events. Want us to offer prayers of gratitude for a wedding anniversary or prayers of remembrance for a loved one who has returned home to the Lord or prayers of thanksgiving for a special person's birthday? Let us know by filling out the blue "Sunday Celebrations, Honors, and Remembrances" form.

The "Sunday Celebrations, Honors, and Remembrances" form is available in the narthex of the church. By completing the brief form with the necessary information (e.g., John and Jane are celebrating 20 years of marriage on June 15 or Mike and Sue wish to honor the memory of Sue's mother, Pauline on what would have been her 100th birthday) and turning it in along with a small \$10 honorarium, you can be assured that the Sunday of your choosing includes the publication of your honor in our Sunday bulletin and prayerful remembrance during our Sunday service.

For more information, please see Fr. Randall.

## STILL TO COME!

There's so much more happening at church and to keep up with it all, we'd like to encourage you to sign up for our e-news service. Each Thursday morning you'll receive a brief update on upcoming services, activities, events, and other church news. On Friday mornings, you'll receive the GSC-TV GUIDE which includes dates, times, and links to all of our online services. You can sign up on the frontpage of our website at [www.GSCMet.com](http://www.GSCMet.com).



Here's some special events coming up in January and February....

**Epiphany Service & King Cake Party** on Wednesday, January 6 at 6:30 PM

**Women's Guild Holy Eucharist** on Tuesday, January 12 at 10:00 AM (all are invited to worship)

**Annual Congregational Meeting** on Sunday, January 31 after the 10:00 AM service

**Service of Candlemas** on Tuesday, February 2 at 6:30 PM

**Ash Wednesday** services on Wednesday, February 17 (times tba)



### GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH

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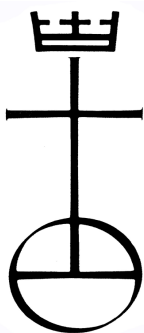
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The Rev. Dr. Randall M. Graf

Pastor & Priest



### **WORSHIP SERVICES**

#### **Holy Eucharist**

8:30 AM & 10:00 AM every Sunday

#### **Service of Midday Prayer**

12:15 PM Tuesday & Wednesday (online only)

#### **Service of Compline**

9:00 PM Friday (online only)