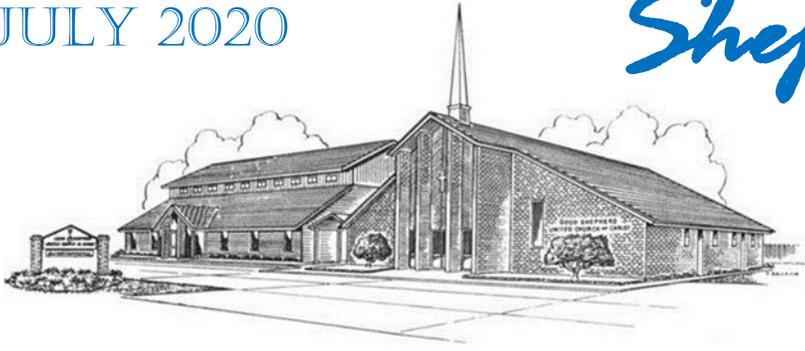


JULY 2020

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-
shiped 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

THE BLESSING OF THE CALL TO SERVE

My dear family of faith, I hope this is not the first time you have realized this, but just in case, I shall explicitly state it. ***I count it a blessing to be called of God to serve you by serving Christ's Church.***

One of the many unfortunate side effects of the societal lockdown caused by COVID-19 has been a feeling of disconnect. For instance, although many details of church life have indeed continued, I feel so many day-to-day details may not be made easily available to all of the entire congregation as one typical form of communication—sharing in-person at worship—has been significantly hampered. There is no substitute for in-person meetings and even now, as we are in the earliest stages of returning to those, there remains the potential for disconnect as some are not ready to return and those that have returned to worship are spread out over multiple meeting times.

I am therefore using this written forum **to bring you up-to-date on some significant changes in the life of my ministry.** While these have been in the works since well before the lockdown, because of the lockdown, they have not necessarily happened as would be typical. Allow me to explain.

As you know, since the beginning of 2020, Good Shepherd Church has been in fellowship with the Diocese of the Western Gulf Coast of the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA). As you also know, I have been working diligently to prepare myself and my ministry to be formally received into the clergy of the ACNA.

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In the tradition of Anglicanism, this is a multistep process of ordination known as Holy Orders. The first step of ordination is known as the Sacred Order of the Diaconate. In less formal terminology, this is where a person is ordained as a deacon in the Church. The second step is ordination to the Sacred Order of the Presbyterate. This is where one is ordained to the priesthood of the Church. For some, ordination as a deacon is a final outcome and these clergy are known as *vocational* or *permanent deacons*. For others, such as myself, ordination as a deacon is a necessary step in order to be ordained to the ministry of the priesthood. Such a deacon is known as a *transitional deacon*.

On Friday, June 19, 2020, I had the distinct honor and blessing to be ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Clark Lowenfield. This beautiful ceremony took place at Trinity Anglican Church in Lafayette, LA. Sadly, because of the limitations on the number of people allowed to meet in places of worship during Phase 2 of reopening in Louisiana, only a handful of leaders from Good Shepherd Church were able to attend. I am very grateful that in addition to my family—Renee, Madison, and Dottie—that our Council President Margaret Aucoin, our denominational taskforce chair Mel Aucoin, and our music director Rinda Coleman were in attendance.

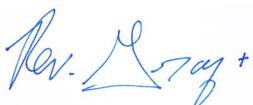
The transitional diaconate, as the name implies, is not permanent, and as such, in approximately six months, my ACNA ordination to the priesthood will occur. It is my prayer that we will be in a very different place with regard to COVID-19 at that time, thus allowing for the presence of any and all members of Good Shepherd Church and others to be present for that ceremony which will happen right here in the sanctuary of our church.

Finally, it is also noteworthy to mention that at the service held on Friday, June 19, Bishop Clark also instituted the Louisiana Deanery and installed the rector of Trinity Anglican Church of Lafayette, The Very Rev'd Peter Johnston as Dean. This is exciting in that it recognizes the reality of the growth of ACNA churches in Louisiana.

In our former denomination, we were a part of the New Orleans Association. That was the smaller group of local churches gathered together for geographical purposes. The New Orleans Association, you may recall, was part of the South Central Conference based out of Texas. Similarly, this correlates in understanding of our fellowship in the ACNA. The Louisiana Deanery is the smaller geographical group of churches that are part of the larger diocese, known as the Diocese of the Western Gulf Coast, which is headquartered in The Woodlands, Texas.

As I mentioned in the opening of this communication, I count it a blessing to be called by God to serve you, the people of God, through the family of faith that is Good Shepherd Church. Today, I am absolutely overjoyed to share with you this news of the completion of my first step toward full ministry credentials within the ACNA and I ask that you continue to hold me and my ministry in prayer as I continue to prepare myself to better serve you on the path that God is calling us toward at Good Shepherd Church.

Until next month, let your light shine!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rev. Randall Graf". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the end.

The Rev'd Randall Graf, Pastor

VIRTUAL HYMN SING!

Good Shepherd Church has been blessed by the musical talents of Ms. Patsy Engles who has put together Tuesday afternoon hymn sings for us and our community for some time now. With the lockdown and social distancing caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Patsy would not be deterred. On Tuesday, June 9, she teamed with our music director Ms. Rinda Coleman to stream an online virtual hymn sing and what a beautiful program it was! Patsy chose some very uplifting Gospel hymns and she and Rinda led all online in offering a joyful noise unto the Lord. If you missed it, the June 9th hymn sing is available in re-play on our YouTube channel located at :

<http://www.YouTube.com/GoodShepherdMet>.



GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH ON SOCIAL MEDIA:



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Good Shepherd Church,

Hello to all.

It is so good to see so many of you in the church for services the last couple weeks. Sunday, June 14 was our first morning back in the sanctuary. It felt like the first day of school to me. We all have been very good at keeping our social distance, so much so that we haven't had opportunity to talk or catch up, but it is a joy to see you all.

Too those of you who are still worshipping with us safely at home, we miss you! Take care, be well!

News of the church, as I see it.

1) Sanctuary Protocol. The sanctuary is cleaned before and after each worship service. The pew back rails are wiped, and the cushions are sprayed with the proper anti-viral spray. Face masks are encouraged, and seating spaced using every other row.

2) Pastor Randy (now Deacon Randy) has done an outstanding job to reach you throughout this social isolation. He is not only reaching our members with the word, but broadcasting to those who are seeking. God bless him and his mission.

3) You have a great resource to offer others! Good Shepherd Church on YouTube. Ms. Sandi Graci told us she tells her friends about our worship services on YouTube. People are hurting, people need to hear God's word. Bring a friend to church on our YouTube channel. Terrific!

4) Your Giving. You have been faithful! Most have tried to keep up their offerings weekly or monthly. Thank you, thank you, thank you! Our giving is a statement to ourselves and to God that we believe he is our provider, that we trust him, and that we believe in the importance of the work of the church. May God bless you all for your giving.

5) Rentals. We have not had gym rentals for the last few months, and our income is not what we would like. These rentals are a gift from God to supplement our income. The good news is the gym floor looks beautiful, volleyball training is resuming, and a daytime women's volleyball club will rent through July!

Spread the word to one and all about our fellowship hall, it could fit the bill for socially distance needs.

And finally, The Prayer Garden, it is so nice. Grab your bible, your prayer list, and spend some time "In the Garden".

Margaret Aucoin
President of GSC Council



NOTES FROM RINDA

I can't begin to explain how great it felt to experience worship with so many Christian friends as we regathered in our sanctuary. I know that we were worshipping together virtually, but...

You may have seen articles and information about how the force of breath required for singing can spread coronavirus particles farther than speaking. Out of an abundance of caution we will limit our congregational singing to one hymn and the Gloria Patri.

These times are difficult for all of us, but we know that we are safe in God's arms. We all look forward to the time when we can join our voices in singing the great hymns of the church. In the meantime, sing them in your devotional time. Read the psalms and know that these were the hymns that Jesus sang.

Looking forward to seeing you!

Rinda Coleman
GSC Music Director



MASKS NOW REQUIRED AT ALL SERVICES

The health and safety of our congregation is a priority. This is one of the reasons we have been offering additional service times each Sunday—so that congregants can spread out in the sanctuary and practice appropriate social distancing. During July, we will continue to offer three services each Sunday: 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, and 2:00 PM.

On Sunday, June 28, after much prayer and discussion, it was announced that our 2:00 PM Sunday service during July will be a "MASK REQUIRED" service beginning Sunday, July 5. While masks have always been encouraged, they have not been required at church. The decision to require a mask at the 2:00 PM service was made so that any parishioner desiring a space for worship that goes beyond social distancing and the choice of wearing a mask would have one service where they could be assured that all present are both socially distanced and masked.

As of June 29, 2020, Jefferson Parish has mandated that beginning July 1, MASKS MUST BE WORN in all public places until further notice. As such, GSC will fully comply with this mandate. Masks will be REQUIRED AT ALL worship services at GSC until further notice. We appreciate your cooperation.

JULY SERVICES @ GSC

Wednesday, July 1 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Sunday, July 5 @ 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, or 2:00 PM—Sunday Service of Holy Eucharist

Monday, July 6 @ 6:00 AM—ARISE: Sacred Hour of Prayer (online only)

Tuesday, July 7 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Wednesday, July 8 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Sunday, July 12 @ 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, or 2:00 PM—Sunday Service of Ante-Communion

Tuesday, July 14 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Wednesday, July 15 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Sunday, July 19 @ 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, or 2:00 PM—Sunday Service of Holy Eucharist

Tuesday, July 21 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Wednesday, July 22 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Sunday, July 26 @ 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, or 2:00 PM—Sunday Service of Ante-Communion

Tuesday, July 28 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Wednesday, July 29 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Please note:

Only Sunday services are currently offered as in-person worship.

The 10:00 AM Sunday service is also live-streamed each week on our YouTube channel.

All other services (i.e., Midday Prayer and the ARISE: Sacred Hour) are only offered online.

All in-person worship services require that masks be worn by all in attendance.

We appreciate your understanding and continued support during this unprecedented and sometimes challenging time.



WHAT'S NEW AND/OR DIFFERENT ABOUT WORSHIP

As we continue traveling through this time in history, we find ourselves once again able to worship in-person. Our personal battle against COVID-19 at Good Shepherd Church began on Thursday, March 5, 2020 when for the first time, we made very specific modifications to our evening Service of Holy Eucharist. These modifications at that time came about as “best practices” that were distributed from the Diocese of the Western Gulf Coast and included:

- minimizing the amount of persons setting up and distributing Holy Communion,
- enforcing washing of hands with hot, soapy water for at least one minute followed by use of hand sanitizer before setting up Holy Communion
- requiring the Celebrant to wash hands with hot, soapy water immediately prior to the start of a service and then requiring him to use hand sanitizer at the start of the Eucharistic prayer
- encouraging a no-touch waving gesture for passing of the peace

By Sunday, March 15, all of the above was still in place and we began offering more services in order to flatten Sunday worship attendance in an effort to “flatten the curve.” By the following Sunday, we were no longer meeting for in-person worship and all of our services were streaming online. As we returned to in-person worship on June 14, here's some of what is new and different compared to just a few short months ago.

We now hold three services (8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, and 2:00 PM) every Sunday in order to enforce social distancing by only utilizing every other pew. Furthermore, as of a July 1 mandate by Jefferson Parish, masks must be worn by all attending worship.

Following the advise that silence is better than a whisper which is better than talking which is better than singing, we've curtailed the amount of singing we do in worship. We do not pass the peace. We do not pass offering plates (having a single plate placed at the entry to the sanctuary to receive offerings). We only distribute Holy Communion “in one kind” (i.e., the consecrated bread) and it is only distributed at the Altar, one communicant at a time, by hand. We no longer hold coffee hour, in-person Bible study, nursery, or Sunday School.

Many of these modifications will certainly turn out to be temporary, but please understand that all of them are being implemented in order to maintain compliance with the best practices offered by the diocese, the recommendations of the CDC, and to maintain compliance with our local parish and state governments. And above all, they are being implemented because at Good Shepherd Church, we dearly love our parishioners and want to do all in our power to continue to offer in-person worship, while being able to assure the safety of those in attendance.

For those not yet ready to return to in-person worship, we will continue to live-stream our 10:00 AM Sunday service, as well as offer online Midday Prayer twice per week (Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 12:15 PM and the ARISE: Sacred Hour at 6:00 AM on the first Monday of the month.

A DIFFERENT LIFE FOR US

BY PATSY ENGLER

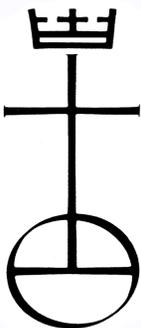
We are into a different life for us
we must know it "in God that we trust"
Even though we don't understand
we need to adjust to this new plan
And to help each other along the way
knowing we will understand this someday
We must pray and honor our God's teaching
to make our life very pleasing



GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH

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www.GSCMet.com

The Rev. Dr. Randall M. Graf, Pastor



Sunday Services

8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 2:00 PM

Midweek Services

6:35 PM Thursdays
On summer hiatus

Midday Prayer

Tuesday and Wednesday 12:15 PM
(online only)