Good Shepherd News

September 2026 Newsletter

Hospitality: Making Room for Our Neighbor

When we know guests are coming to our home, most of us prepare for their arrival. We pick things up, clean the bathroom, straighten the living room, take out the trash, and make sure there is a comfortable place for everyone to sit. We might put on a pot of coffee or prepare something to eat. We do these things not because our homes need to be perfect, but because we want our guests to know something important: **We are glad you are here. We were expecting you. There is a place for you.**

The same is true of our church home.

Christian hospitality is much more than having a clean building or attractive landscaping. Yet the condition of our church and campus is part of the welcome we extend. Before someone hears the Gospel proclaimed, receives Communion, or has a conversation with one of us, they have already experienced our congregation through what they see upon arrival.

Is the campus cared for? Is it easy to find the entrance? Is the parking lot maintained? Are the buildings clean and safe? Does the sanctuary feel welcoming? Can someone who has never been here before figure out where to go? Our building does not need to be perfect, but like our homes when company is coming, it should communicate that we care about the people who enter it.

As Lutherans, we understand this kind of hospitality as part of our vocation. God calls us to love and serve our neighbor in the ordinary places and activities of life. Caring for our church property, greeting someone at the door, making room at a table, cleaning up after an event, or noticing someone standing alone may seem like simple things. Yet God can work through these ordinary acts to extend grace, welcome, and a sense of belonging to another person.

Church Events

Sundays @ 9:30 am Worship Service

Wednesdays @ 5:00 Bible Study

- **Sept 15th Finance Committee @ 10:00 am**
- **Sept 17th Book Club @ 4:00 pm**
- **Sept 19th Women of Good Shepherd @ 9:30 am**
- **Sept 22nd Church Council @ 6:00 pm**
- **Sept 26th. Women's Co-op Retreat @ 9:00 am**

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Website:
www.goodshepherdbuenapark.org
YouTube: bit.ly/GSLCBPCA

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday–Thursday
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Our buildings are also gifts entrusted to our care. Generations before us gave generously so that Good Shepherd would have a place to worship, learn, gather, serve, and proclaim the Gospel. Caring for these facilities is an act of stewardship. Repairs, painting, landscaping, cleaning, safety improvements, and replacing things that have worn out are not simply expenses. They are part of caring for the place God has entrusted to us for ministry.

But good hospitality cannot stop with a well-maintained building.

Imagine inviting someone into your home, opening the door, and then walking away without saying hello. The house might be spotless and the table beautifully prepared, but the guest would probably not feel very welcome.

The same can happen at church.

When someone walks through our doors, they need more than a clean building. They need **us**.

Hospitality means noticing the person we do not recognize and introducing ourselves. It means helping someone find the sanctuary, restroom, or fellowship hall rather than simply pointing down the hallway. It means inviting someone to sit with us. It means introducing them to another person. It means making room at our table instead of always sitting with the same people. It means noticing the person standing alone during fellowship and going over to say hello.

Most importantly, hospitality means being genuinely interested in the person God has placed before us.

Jesus continually made room for people others overlooked. He ate with people. He listened to them. He noticed them. He welcomed children, strangers, outsiders, and those who were searching for hope. The hospitality of Jesus was not simply politeness. It was a visible expression of God's grace.

That is the hospitality we are called to practice.

We do not care for our church building simply because we want a nice-looking campus. And we do not welcome people simply because we want more people in the pews. We do these things because **our neighbor matters to God, and therefore our neighbor matters to us.**

Someone may come through our doors carrying grief we cannot see. Someone may be lonely. Someone may be searching for a community after years away from the church. Someone may be wondering whether there is a place where they will be accepted. Someone may simply be curious about what happens inside our building on Sunday morning.

We may never know what it took for that person to walk through our doors.

That is why hospitality belongs to all of us.

Our church home does not have to be perfect, just as our own homes do not have to be perfect before we welcome someone inside. But it should be cared for. And when someone arrives, they should discover more than a cared-for building. They should encounter a community ready to welcome them.

As we care for Good Shepherd and prepare for the future, perhaps we can begin asking ourselves two simple questions:

Does our church home show people that we are expecting them?

And when they arrive, **do our words and actions show them that we are glad they came?**

May Good Shepherd always be a place where there is room for another chair, another story, another neighbor, and another person seeking the grace of God.

Because in Christ, there is always room at the table for you.

Blessings, Pastor Jennifer

President's Message

"OUR FUTURE"

I think I must be a little crazy to even think about opening this "Pandoras Box" and I do not disagree with that thought. However, I am still going to give it my best shot.

There are many different pieces of the puzzle of life in this box. Some are fun, and some are not so pleasant to think about, but they are part of our daily lives. #1 The future of Good Shepherd and how we have watched it survive so many ups and downs. Our small congregation continues to amaze me as we all come together time after time to spread God's good deeds to our community and each other. Now, with the help and guidance of Pastor Jennifer, we will continue to move forward and grow. #2 Our individual futures: this is different for each of us, and sometimes the future can look pretty bleak and out of control. If we just take a deep breath, think before we speak or act, and treat others in the manner we would like to be treated, our futures would not look so scary. These choices can change lives, especially our own. #3 The future of our country? As mid-term elections loom ahead, we must find a way to come together in some sort of harmony while still holding on to our own beliefs. Our world is made up of so many different people, nationalities, customs, religions, and languages that it is easy to get very confused, and it can be difficult to find common ground. I pray each day that we can find the thread that can pull us together and allow us to look past the differences and live as Americans while still holding on to our individual beliefs. #4 The future of our world. They say that LOVE makes the world go around and I do think that this is a great way to think. However, I do think it takes a bit more. Our world is made up of many countries, states, villages, towns, neighborhoods, families, and individuals. I started off with the small future of Good Shepherd and grew to the largest future of our world. My point is we are all one and our future depends on each of us and the decisions we make. We are allowed to disagree, and have different opinions. However, to make the world continue to go around, we need Truth, Compassion, Patience, Kindness, and Forgiveness in order to do the work of Love. Can we all recognize that God is at the heart of it all? So let us all give thanks for the ability to disagree, become frustrated, angry, and fearful, but know that these are only part of the whole of our hearts from which gratitude comes for the many gifts we have been given. Let us meet these challenges with faith and trust. Our positivity can be a testament to our faith and steadfast belief that God is all good, all the time, and always with us, and that is what makes the world go around.

Three things that will last forever: Faith, Hope and Love and the greatest of these is LOVE. Corinthians 13:13

God Bless us all, Jessie

Prayer Concerns

Please keep the following people in your prayers…

Casey, Anthony, Tony, Kim, Wanda, Matt, Carroll, Margaret, Ann, Baby Jasmine Blanca, Diva, Eddy, Leslie, Mary C, Olivia, Kaye, Brandi, Ethan, George, Pam, Mary, Michael, Jena, Marcia, and Roy.

Please pray for the ELCA Presiding Bishop, Rev. Yehiel Curry, our Synodical Bishop, Rev. David Nagler, and our Synod VP, Jeff Cours

Stewardship Corner

Our "Hand to Mouth" Existence

Shopping in a department store, a minister saw a man whom he knew to be the director of the City Mission on Skid Row. Although the minister did not know the director, he wished to be friendly and to encourage the fellow who spent most of each day ministering to those trapped in poverty and/or addiction.

Introducing himself, the minister began asking about the director's work. "How is it going?," queried the clergyman. "It's a hand to mouth existence," came the answer, "God's hand providing for our mouths."

That answer was and is a universal truth. It is true that whether we are "down and out" or "up and in," we exist only because God's hand provides for our mouths.

"Who provides the raven his food?," asks Job (38:41). And someone greater than Job said:

"Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink or ... what you will wear: Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" (Matthew 6:25)

Our Lord reminds us that God always knows what we need and that what is truly important is that we strive first for the Kingdom of God. Then Christ's promise is: "All these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:33)

Good stewards are those who gratefully acknowledge their "hand to mouth existence," and who generously share what God has provided to them for the work of the Kingdom.

Treasurer's Report for September 2026 July 2026 Review

Envelope giving for July 2026 was $6,044, which is $623 under the monthly 2026 budget, but year-to-date, the total giving is $359 over the 2026 Budget. **Thank You for your faithful giving**. For July 2026, the Net Income was ($374), and year-to-date, it is $23,512. There was $7,250 transferred from the Endowment Fund in June. The church's pledge to the Synod is current. In summary, the income is over budget, and the expenses are under budget.

While the July financial reports show the last full month of activity, they help the Finance Committee guide the church's finances. Between monthly reports, Kim, the bookkeeper, provides a weekly update of the checking account balance to ensure we are covering our checks.

Richard Lutz, Treasurer

Food Donations For
Centralia School District
Neighborhood Resource Center

Food is being collected for the Neighborhood Resource Center to provide meals for students and families in need during school holidays, when school meals are unavailable. Donated food will help these families get through the holidays. The following items are needed:

Spaghetti; Spaghetti sauce; Oatmeal Instant Quaker boxes; Cereal boxes, Granola bars; Mac & Cheese Instant boxes; Pancake Mix; Rice; and Beans.

If you cannot shop for these items but would like to donate money instead, please indicate the amount on your envelope offering with a statement FOR FOOD Donations, and we will be glad to shop for you. If you have questions, please see Barbara, Carol, or Cathy.

Property Update

Marv finished sanding and staining the picnic tables, and Killian removed three large mushroom areas of growth under the red Tacoma plants. He & Killian put new plywood on the back of the trash container in the west parking lot that the homeless removed. Marv replaced the lights and batteries in the EXIT signs and he and Killian installed 8 smoke detectors in the Preschool classrooms.

Anthony, Jessie's son, checked the light switch in Room 3 of the Preschool classroom and fixed the loose wire on the control panel behind Room 2 so the light switch works in Room 3. He also showed Jessie how to activate the fire alarms or turn them off if needed.

Pastor put up EXIT signs in Foster Hall and new signs over the doors in the Narthex that read, "The doors will remain unlocked when Church is occupied." She also called EDIM to fix the north TV in the Sanctuary.

Fausto trimmed the plants on the Preschool sheds, trimmed the yellow Tacoma tree and the two palm trees in the east parking lot. His lawnmower is in the shop but he will mow the grass and trim the bushes behind Foster Hall and the classrooms.

Jessie and I replaced the sign message and thank you, Debbie, Diego and Pastor for helping me with the current puzzle in Pastor's Office. Fresh eyes are badly needed. A big thank you to Irene for coffee and goodies after Church on Sunday mornings.

Sharon Castellaw
Property Chair

SEPTEMBER

3rd	Debbie Madrigal
11th	Tina Ettel
12th	Albert Faust
15th	Niall Dunagan
25th	Richard Lutz

Good Shepherd Leaders

Pastor Jennifer Zahnow

Church Council

Pres. Jessie DeVito.

Sect. Sharon Castellaw.

Treas. Richard Lutz

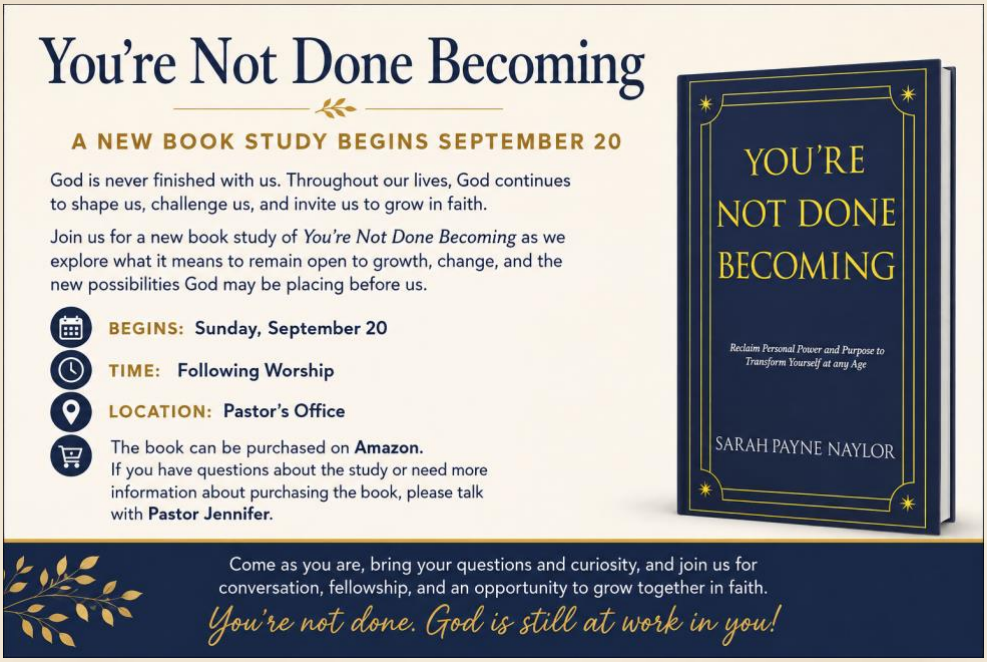
Outreach: Cathy Choma Christian

Education: Carroll Kolodzik

Worship: Terry Moyer

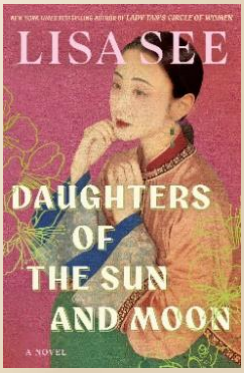
Thank you for the beautiful get-well cards and kind messages during my recent hospitalization. It's always good to hear from friends at Good Shepherd.

Wanda Haldane



Good Shepherd Book Club

Our book club is brushing off the sand from our summer break at the beach with book in hand to discuss Lisa See's Book "Daughters of the Sun and Moon".
Please join us at Phyllis' home on September 17 at 4:00.



Women of Good Shepherd

Oh my gosh it is September 2026 already! Are you like me the days seem to whiz by to fast and so many things on my summer list have been left undone. Well move over Summer and let's work on Fall because we have a lot that is happening at Good Shepherd for our Women ----

Mark your calendars and let's mark those dates

1. **Women of Good Shepherd's Regular Monthly Meeting**
   Saturday, September 19 in Fellowship Hall at 9:30 am
   Service projects and fellowship

2. **Baby Shower for Precious Life Saturday, October 24**

Teaming with Mt. Calvary to have a baby shower at Good Shepherd for 12 of their mothers. Through donations, we will have gifts for each mom to take with them in preparation for their new babies and prepare a nice Baby Shower Luncheon.

We hope to see you all at one of these events.

Opportunities to Connect and Grow in Faith

September 26 - Women's Co-op Day Retreat at Good Shepherd. This retreat is led by the women of Good Shepherd, Our Redeemer, Bethlehem, Mt. Calvary, Christ, and King of Glory. Please see Cathy if you would like to attend.

October 4 - Blessing of the Animals following worship (11:00 a.m.)

October 24 - Precious Life Baby Shower.
Please see Cathy if you would like to help with this event.

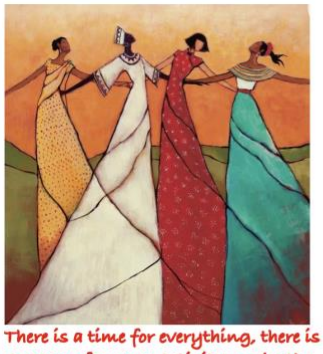
October 31- Trunk or Treat. Please see Pastor Jennifer if you would like to help with this event.

November - Collecting gifts for families in need. More information to come.

December 6 - After worship, there will be a special event with food.
Please mark your calendars. More information to come….

December 12 - Women of Good Shepherd Christmas Tea.
Please see Cathy if you would like to help with this event.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
7082 Crescent Avenue
Buena Park, CA 90620



There is a time for everything, there is a season for every activity under the heavens. (Ecclesiastes 3: 1)

BELOVED COMMUNITY WOMEN'S RETREAT
"TO EVERYTHING, THERE IS A SEASON"
SATURDAY, SEPT. 26, 2026
9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

Join us for a day of worship, fellowship, and inspiration as we gather in beloved community to celebrate God's creation and deepen our commitment to caring for the earth. Together we will worship, sing, enjoy a delicious lunch, plant new life, and discover ways to bloom where God has planted us. We are honored to welcome Rev. Melissa Maxwell-Doherty, retired Vice President of Mission & Identity at California Lutheran University, as our guest speaker. This year's retreat will also highlight the Pacific Marine Mammal Center in Laguna Beach and its ministry of rescuing, rehabilitating, and releasing marine mammals while promoting ocean stewardship. The retreat will be held at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Buena Park. The cost is **$30 per person**, which includes lunch and all materials. Donations to support the Pacific Marine Mammal Center (cash or checks payable to the Center) will also be gratefully accepted. Registration is now open. Contact Cathy for more information.