

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

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Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9am-noon; Thursday 1-3pm

A Caring Community Anchored in Christ, Reaching Out to All People

February 2021

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 37 No. 02

Just a reminder to everyone that if you or a loved one is hospitalized or wish a visit from Pastor John, please contact the Church office. Under Covid restrictions our pastor cannot visit the hospital or someone's home without an invitation. If you would like special prayer or to be included in the intercessory prayers, ask to speak to Pastor John.

Territorial Land Acknowledgement: We acknowledge that we gather on Treaty Six territory to the North of the Red Deer River and Treaty Seven territory to the South of the Red Deer River. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit footsteps that have marked these lands for centuries and whose respectful stewardship have enabled us all to enjoy the riches of the Creator's blessings.

From Our Pastor's Desk

Greetings in the name of Christ.

We hope and pray that all of you are doing well "out there". All of us staff here at Good Shepherd long for the day when all these restriction and guidelines are done with and the COVID virus will be a thing of the past. Until then, we continue to offer our worship services online, and although it's certainly not like being together face to face as a community, hopefully these online services are a blessing to you and with the Spirit, maintains our commitment to the body of Christ.



As you cope with the realities of the kind of isolation this pandemic has forced on us, please do remember that you are most welcome to phone me at the church number, or email me personally at revjohn.goodshep@telus.net.

We are entering February now and with that, this year's Lenten Season comes a little earlier. We'll finish our Season of Epiphany and then start our Lenten journey with Ash Wednesday on February 17. Watch online for a joint service with our sisters and brothers from both St. Luke's Anglican and St. Leonard's Anglican.

The focus of the Lenten season in the history of the Church is of repentance, disciplines of faith, and of following Christ in his walk to the cross of the crucifixion. Some of the practices of Lent have things such as participating in the Ash Wednesday Service, adding the disciplines of prayer, reading the scriptures, reading inspirational books, adding extra learning opportunities to your daily walk of faith. It seems that "giving something up for Lent" often builds up nothing but our own stubbornness of will. Instead, think about "adding" something to your life! Practicing these disciplines of prayer, meditation, repentance, acts of love and kindness to those in need, can add

more inspiring hope to your life than the act of taking something away, especially in a year in which so much of our life has seemingly been taken away already. (*Unless, of course, it's something you really should get out of your life...)

Finally, I love St. Paul's final notes to the Ephesians (chapter 4), "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

In the peace of Christ,
Pastor John

From Bishop Larry

Dear Beloved of God –

The Gospel according to Mark does not begin with angels, a prophetic dream, or a miraculous birth. Instead, the gospel writer hurls us, ready or not, into a lonely and barren wilderness – a desert – where everything either bites or burns or stings.

As Jesus emerges from the baptismal water, the heavens are ripped open, the Spirit descends like a dove and the voice of God proclaims, "You are my Son, the Beloved, in you I am well pleased." And immediately, Jesus was driven out – hurled out – into the desert to be tormented by wild beasts and tempted by evil. (Mark 1:1-12)

It's not exactly what you would expect, is it? God was pleased, even well pleased with him. And yet, he was hurled from affirmation and love into a desert-like wilderness of sand and heat and wild beasts and temptation.

Experts say deserts are formed under unique climactic conditions. Maps show that they cover about 25% of the earth's surface. Globes indicate that they are found only between specific latitudes. That is what the experts say. But we know the truth about the wilderness, don't we?

The truth is that sometimes – no matter where we live or how far we travel – the wilderness is all we can see. Despite weather reports or average rainfall charts, we find ourselves in the wilderness: blinded, sunburned, dying of thirst.

This desert can feel so familiar that we name every shriveled plant, every venomous snake, every blistering ray, every irritating grain of sand. Sometimes, the wilderness feels a lot like home, a lot like now, and what we've experienced this past year.

The single mom, stretched so thin that she almost disappears, knows the desert of exhaustion and guilt. The rejected child, watching silently outside the playground, knows the desert called loneliness. The ill, newly aware of test results and consultations, know the desert of fear and uncertainty. The grieving, now alone, know the desert of unwanted solitude. Parishioners, reeling from scandal, know the desert of a trust betrayed.

The truth is, deserts are not found only in Africa, or in Nevada, or in the Sinai Peninsula. Some of the harshest wildernesses are not marked on any map. They lie just around the corner, or in your living room, in the very heart of your life.



But there is something more about the wilderness – something more that Mark wants us to hear: Jesus has been there first. Here is the Good News of Mark's opening scenes. No wilderness is so remote, barren, inhospitable, or filled with danger that Jesus has not walked there first.

And Jesus' presence here reminds us something else: despite all appearances to the contrary, the wilderness is filled with life. A handful of soil swirling in the hot wind can be filled with hundreds of seeds, waiting for a chance to bloom. That withered plant still has living roots deep underground. That landscape, empty in the harsh light of day, comes to life in the moonlight with reptiles and insects.

Even at its most desolate, the wilderness is ready to bloom at the first sign of life-giving water. Maybe that is why the scriptures speak of the wilderness as a place for discovery and transformation.

And there is more: the angels waited on him. Jesus is not alone. He is cared for in the wilderness, receiving sustenance and nourishment.

And this is our experience too – for in the wilderness of our 40-day Lenten journey, and over this past year – we have also been given sustenance: the Word, the Eucharist, community, family, opportunities for service and action.

This Lent finds many of us traveling through the wilderness, wrestling with demons and tempted by evil. We may feel like we have been thrown out into the wilderness. Some people might look upon this journey and despair.

But we know the truth about the wilderness, don't we?

In Christ Jesus –
Shalom,

+Bishop Larry Kochendorfer

"The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

Notes from Shelly

"It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name,
O Most High." Psalm 92:1



It's hard to believe that our [Christmas](#) and Epiphany seasons have come and gone. The beautiful carols that we treasure in our hearts have been sung and preparation for Lent is now being pondered in the weeks ahead. Our five Sundays in January offered a variety of services, accompanists, singers, readers and power point operators as we continued to worship online. I extend my deepest appreciation and gratitude to all the volunteers who come together as a team for our weekly [Wednesday](#) rehearsals. We are blessed by the dedication and enthusiasm of our camera men, Glen Kneller and Tom Marstaller, who devote their time and energy to the rehearsals and then spend hours editing afterwards.

Welcome back Nadine! We extend a warm welcome to her parents also as they settle in and make their home in Red Deer. You have all been in our prayers these past months. Sincere

thanks to Nadine for her prayers and support while she was away. We look forward to seeing you at the piano soon!

Thank you to Pastor John and Darlene who care deeply for the people of Good Shepherd and have been a joy to work with. What a glorious **Sunday** it will be when we are able to unite and sing praises to God in our sanctuary!

Shelly Pfeiffer

Witness

—“ Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ...if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is perfected in us.” *John 1 3:18, 4:12*

2020, what a year this has been! We started with a Greet, Eat and Meet Potluck Supper February 1,2020 with our fellow congregations Bentley and Innisfail. Pastor Darrell and Pastor Rita introduced us to a fun Get to Know Each Other game. Thank you to everyone who brought potluck dishes.

In March, we held two Soup and a Bun suppers prior to the Lenten Holden Evening Services. Again, thank you to those who brought soups and buns, The realities of Covid-19 had set in and we choose to stop. We bade a sad farewell to Pastors Darrell and Pastor Rita, but were able to have a get together on the front lawn wishing them well in their retirement.

2020 was a quiet year for our committee. We've come to accept the realities of Covid-19 and we have hope for tomorrow. Looking forward to seeing what 2021 brings, we'll be busy planning then.

A special **THANK YOU** to the committee members for their continued support.
Barbaranne Stickelmier Chairperson

Service (Social) Committee

Eye Glasses collection If you have glasses that you no longer use, please put them in the box on the top shelf near the nursery when you visit the church. These will be delivered to Dr. Lienweber in Red Deer for distribution in third world countries.

Stamps collection Please continue to save your stamps and put them in the box marked STAMPS on the top shelf near the nursery. These are sold to stamp collectors and vendors. The revenue generated is used by the Canadian Bible Society to purchase Bibles for Canadian prison ministry. 10 lbs of stamps = approx. 6 bibles for distribution. Cut the stamp (with the postmark if possible) off the envelope leaving ¼ inch border around it. Collect stamps on white or light coloured envelopes, not brown industrial envelopes. Put your stamps in a Ziploc bag and deposit in the box. Thanks!



You are invited to participate in the Coldest Night of the Year, Canada's National Walk for Homelessness and poverty to be held February 20th in support of the Mustard Seed Red Deer. **CNOY is a COVID-SAFE**, family-friendly walk to raise money for the most vulnerable men, women and children of Central Alberta who are experiencing poverty, hurt and hunger. Please take a moment to sign up your team to walk virtually or in-person following the link provided.

[Coldest Night of the Year 2021 - Red Deer \(cnoy.org\)https://youtu.be/ef6A5t4EG3c](https://youtu.be/ef6A5t4EG3c)

Things will be a little different this year to keep everyone safe and make the event a success. This year, you can choose how you would like to walk and fundraise:

In-person: The Mustard Seed in Red Deer will be hosting a 100% outdoor event where people can come together to walk as a socially distance group on 2km and 5km routes. (AS permitted by the provincial and municipal governments on Feb 20) Walkers at the in-person event will be able to schedule their own walk times. Walk times will be emailed to all in-person participants. There will be a very brief outdoor opening ceremony to kick-off the event this year. Pre-packaged snacks will be available at one rest stop along the route, along with packaged drinks.

There is no registration fee this year. This year, participants who raise a modest minimum will receive their own CNOY toque as our thank you for fundraising. There will be no traditional registration this year. It will be replaced with walker check-in and toque pick up that will be faster, smoother, socially distanced, touchless, outdoor and colder experience. Every registered participants name will be entered into a draw to have to the chance of winning one of over 10 prizes. If you have any questions about this years event please contact Scott Tilbury at 403.598.7076

Eternity for Today subscribers Your first devotional booklet for 2021 was put in your church mailbox in early January. If you have not yet done so, please remember to drop in to pick it up. If you requested your copy to be mailed, you should have received it. Please call Jeanette (403-782-3205) if it has not arrived.

Camp Kuriakos <https://kuriakos.ab.ca/>

Scriptures for February 2021

Jan 31	4 Epiphany	Deut 18:15-20	Ps 111	1 Cor 8:1-13	Mark 1:21-28
Feb 7	5 Epiphany	Isa 40:21-31	Ps 147:1-11, 20c	1 Cor 9:16-23	Mark 1:29-39
Feb 14	Transfiguration of Our Lord	2 Kings 2:1-12	Ps 50:1-6	2 Cor 4:3-6	Mark 9:2-9
Feb 17	Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isa 58:1-12	Ps 51:1-17	2 Cor 5:20b-6:10	Matt 6:1-6, 16-21
Feb 21	1 Lent	Gen 9:8-17	Ps 25:1-10	1 Peter 3:18-22	Mark 1:9-15
Feb 28	2 Lent	Gen 17:1-7, 15-16	Ps 22:23-31	Rom 4:13-25	Mark 8:31-38
Mar 7	3 Lent	Exod 20:1-17	Ps 19	1 Cor 1:18-25	John 2:13-22



Bits & Pieces from the office.....

HELP! The church has a great need for **someone to step forward to manage and update our website.** Now more than ever we need to have as many ways as possible to keep newcomers aware of our church and it's ministries. I simply do not have the time to do this. Also, there are many ways to make the website more appealing. NOTE: The website can be managed from anywhere. There must be some computer savvy person out there who is looking for ways to serve God. Perhaps you know of a young adult who wouldn't mind updating our site. I will supply you with any information you might need.

Contact Information....Have you moved? Cancelled your landline? Got a new cell phone number or changed your email address? Let us know so we can update our records. Thank you!

Shane Cornelius does our weekly maintenance and upkeep of the church inside and out. Since the return of some of our outside users he is maintaining sanitation stations and observing COVID-19 extra requirements. He has set up boot racks by the front door in hopes of cutting down the tracking in of mud and other particles and especially salt when used.



Ladies Wednesday Evening Bible Study

The Bible study will resume when the province opens in person gatherings to 20 persons.

Volunteers to help operate the video streaming equipment needed!

Hopefully before long we will be back to in person worship services,. Along with the in person services we are planning to stream the services.

Some of the equipment has been installed already, and we will just be getting a few more pieces to get the system ready to go! The goal will be to have our services available on line as we do now, but record them on Sunday morning without too much editing.

The recording and editing work has been done entirely by Glen K., and more recently Tom M., since the start of the pandemic. We are looking for a few people to become part of a team to run the equipment on Sunday mornings. We will have training sessions for those interested starting in mid February. It would be great to have a few people comfortable operating the equipment before we are back to in person services.

If you are interested in helping, and want more information please email me at rondave62@gmail.com

Ron Kunz

From Our Council Chair

Belated Happy New Year to all of you from your council chair.

It appears that our first mild part of the winter is coming to an end, giving way to the colder temperatures. Just in time for many cattle farmers commencing their calving season. Let's hope for the farmer's sake (and probably the snow birds sake who chose to remain in Canada this year thanks to COVID 19) that the colder temperatures will not last too long.

What a strange year it has been for all of us. I learned a lot more virtual skills than I had ever expected to when I started out as Good Shepherd council chair in March. Thankfully there are a few more experienced folks on church council that can help me out with zoom sessions and alike. They say God only gives us what we can handle – and boy does he have confidence in me.

Council is currently preparing for a virtual Annual General Meeting for Good Shepherd **on March 14th 2021**. We are hoping to be able to have a combined virtual and in person meeting. The idea is to offer some folks to be present in our church – especially those who do not have access to

internet. Details will depend on what provincial restrictions we will have to content with at that time and how many members want to brave into our church building with still so many COVID cases in Red Deer. To keep everyone, but in particular the vulnerable portion of our congregation safe is obviously our main concern – so remain tuned for updates. Please pan to attend the AGFM in virtual or in person format.

One important agenda item of the AGM is the election of the new church council members. This year there are three members who will exit the council (currently holding the positions of vice chair, worship committee, social ministry and secretary). Moreover there are two positions currently vacant – youth and property. This is a pretty serious dilemma for our congregation as we need more than 5 people at the helm of the operation. Normally we have 9 elected positions on church council plus the pastor, parish administrator, music director and treasurer being in advisory position as non-voting members. We need more folks on the church council as we want to keep the Ministry of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd going. It would be awesome to welcome some new faces in our midst, but we would welcome returning previous council members as well.

Please consider prayerfully if you can help in this and if we can add your name to be a church council member. This would be a great opportunity for some young adults to be welcomed in our midst. Remember while everyone’s schedules is a bit less crazy during the COVID restrictions, helping our church is a meaningful way to stay involved and make a difference in our ministry.

Our Nominating Committee to find new (or returning) council members consists this year of Barb Primas and Don Nielsen. If you think you or someone you know would like to take the opportunity to join us on council please give Barb or Don a shout. You can also give me a shout if you like.

If you have any questions or concerns give me a call at 587 877 5378
Annette Suominen

Our Church Council

Executive:

Chair	Annette Suominen
Vice-Chair	Bill Hehn
Treasurer	Paul Erlandson
Secretary	Renate Scheelar

Committees:

Worship	Bill Hehn
Learning	Ron Kunz
Witness (Evangelism)	Barbaranne Stickelmier
Service (Social Ministry)	Jeanette Page
Stewardship & Finance	Greg Krauss
Youth	Vacant
Mutual Ministry	Dallas Craven
Property Management	vacant

Financial Recording Secretary: Dallas Craven

Financial Update December 31, 2020

As at December 30th our bank balance is \$98,045,34. This includes \$40,000.00 from the federal government interest free CEBA loan. Repayment will be required by December 31 2022 at which time \$10,000.00 will be forgiven. We also hold \$24,003.50 in money market. December brought a spike to general envelope giving as well as support for the new AV equipment.

Income

Facility Rental	2,732	
Designated Offerings	12,533	
Envelope	201,332	
Loose & miscellaneous	226	
Fed Gov Subsidy	2,199	
TOTAL		\$ 220,192

Expenses

Learning	746	
Mutual Ministry	119,760	
Service	1,942	
Witness and Evangelism	291	
Property	37,554	
Stewardship and Finance		
Benevolence	19,200	
Designated	12,283	
Office	5,727	
Insurance	6,683	
Worship	7,157	
TOTAL		\$ 213,094
Income less Expense		\$ 7,098

