

February 2 0 1 6

The Staff



The Newsletter of Shepherd of the Glen Lutheran Church

14551 Burntwoods Rd, Glenwood, MD 21738 410-489-0063 E-mail: shepherdoftheglen@gmail.com

Sunday Worship & School 9:30 AM

The first week or so of January I ran into Carole Kramer at church and we started chatting about getting our Christmas decorations down. A necessary chore, but we agreed it's a lot more fun to put them up than take them down! And with all the busy-ness and rearranging of our spaces for the holidays, January is like a big "reset" button where we get our houses and lives back into order. For a while during the holidays, "business as usual" is suspended, but then we have to get back to "normal." To tell you the truth—for as much as I love the holidays, it's nice to get back to normal and get back on track.

Same here at church—I arrived at a very busy time of year—even busier for you who had just thrown a big retirement party for Pr. Jim. Now that the Advent wreath is put away, the lights are down and the tree is safely stashed away, we can begin to get back on track with the ministry of doing God's work here in Glenwood.

But I wouldn't say we're getting "back to normal" because we're all forging a new path here—praying, imagining, visioning about where we are going as a congregation. That's the task of this interim ministry time—to take a good, hard look at where we've been, where we are, and where we're going. We need to realistically assess what the needs and gifts of this church are so that we can continue to do God's work. Some substantive conversations are beginning and I want that to open up even more fully.

Church is changing across all denominations. Our situation nowadays is a lot like that of the first followers of Jesus. They had been part of an established, recognized and influential religious tradition that had proclaimed to the world the sovereignty of the one God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But ideas were circulating that shook up the status quo, *radical* ideas like, "love your enemies," "forgive seven times seventy," "in Christ there is not slave or free, Jew or Gentile, male or female," and most disruptive of all, "the one you seek is not here. He is risen." The "normal" course of how things were 'supposed' to work was turned upside down—even death wasn't what it had been thought to be! All this happened in an atmosphere of political unrest, many voices vying for power, and fear for a way of life that was being lost—that was life in the first century Roman Empire when Jesus came on the scene.

That's why the book of Acts is so pertinent to us. It's the story of how the first few followers of Jesus formed what would eventually be called "church," and they did it in leaps and starts, with plenty of mistakes, disagreements, setbacks and plans that we're constantly needing to be revised and rethought. Jesus had told them to go and tell about him, and promised to be with them, but he didn't leave any manual for how this was all supposed to get done so they prayed, worshiped, took to the road and trusted the Holy Spirit.

Aren't we in that same position nowadays? Most mainline churches are declining in number and influence from what they had in the 1950's and 60's when church attendance and membership peaked in this country. The biggest growing religious designation now is "none." Re-creating, renewal and mission aren't

optional anymore, those are what it means to do ministry in the 21st century—and that’s what makes me so excited! We are living at a time when churches have to move forward and there’s no manual on just how to do that. We at Shepherd of the Glen are right there, at a time of change like the first Christians were. And like them, we need to trust in the slowly unfolding work of the Holy Spirit.

That’s why I’d like to ask you to commit to the study of Acts planned to begin January 31, right after worship 10:45-11:45, for 5 weeks (if the snow that’s being predicted materializes and we must cancel church, we’ll have the congregational meeting on the 31st and begin the study the following week). We’ll study what the first Christians did, apply that to our church, and most importantly, we’ll begin a visioning process for the next chapter—Acts 29, the one we will write. The study is particularly important for the call committee and church leaders, but *everyone* has a stake in the future of this congregation and the more who are a part of this visioning, the stronger we will be. This visioning is the core work of this interim ministry period for us all.

I’m hearing that there is confusion about just what the term “interim” means, particularly in regards to my call here. Interim pastors are usually called to be temporary for a specified amount of time and in most cases, a permanent call at that site is not an option. In this case, the synod offered the possibility of my being the permanently called pastor, so that is one of the options that we will explore together. At this point, though, my ministry here now is to function as interim until we decide what best serves the needs here, meaning that we are to work together to discern where God is leading us. That requires that we trust the work of the Holy Spirit, who never fails to care for us. The Holy Spirit also often surprises us, and we need to be in this process with hearts, eyes, and minds open to the Spirit’s lead. Meanwhile, I’m honored and happy to be at Shepherd of the Glen at this time, and I’m excited about where we’ll journey together in this time of discernment. This interim period is unsettling, because we don’t know what the future will bring, but it’s also liberating—a time we can take risks and explore new ideas knowing that while the future isn’t “written in stone” and God’s hand is in the process. Discernment requires open, honest conversation, and as I said, that’s already beginning. Straightforward communication is essential, so I encourage you to come to me directly with ideas, hopes, fears and concerns. My cell is 410 707 4640. If I don’t pick up, leave a message and I will get back to you and listen to you, I promise. You can also reach me by e mail at susan.marie.beck@gmail.com. Please also let me know of any pastoral care needs that arise.

Now that you’ve just gotten all your Christmas decorations put away and the last of the Christmas cookies given away, Cadbury Crème eggs and jelly beans are already beginning to appear on the store shelves because Easter is early this year! We begin Lent with Ash Wednesday, February 10. This is a valuable beginning to the discipline of Lent, so please take note of the services that will be offered that day. Also, much like the early disciples whose gatherings revolved around a meal, we will gather for Lenten dinner discussions Wednesdays in Lent at 6-7:30 PM at the Smokin’ Hot Bar and Grill to eat and talk together. Bring your Bibles, because we will be looking at and studying the “other” readings for the up-coming Sunday—the Old Testament or epistle readings that have so much to say to us, but we often overlook.

Since we’re in the season of unpredictable weather—please remember that God cares a lot more about your safety than about you getting to church or a church activity. We have a telephone tree to let people know about inclement weather cancellations, but if in doubt, call me before you head out.

Peace and warmth to you all this February,

Pastor Susan

Lent at Shepherd of the Glen



Fat Tuesday” comes early to our church:
Pancakes “by George” Sunday, February 7



Worship and Imposition of Ashes

at 12 noon and at 7PM

“Drive By” ashes in parking lot 4:00-5:30PM



Wednesdays in Lent

(Feb 17, 24, Mar. 2, 9, and 16)

Dinner Discussions at Smokin’ Hot Bar and Grill, 6-7:30PM

Bring your Bible.

New Website <http://www.sog-gmd.org>

Please plan to stay for a **BIBLE STUDY on Acts** beginning January 31, 10:45-11:45 and running for 5 weeks. We’ll discuss how the first group of Jesus-followers learned how to be church and apply what we learn to visioning for the future of Shepherd of the Glen. Our focus will be on Acts 29—that’s the next chapter.

EASTER LILIES may be purchased to decorate the church for Easter at a cost of \$12.50 per plant. There are envelopes in the narthex for ordering. Orders must be in by March 6th.

Who are we? Why are we here? Think about these questions and write your thoughts on a post-it and place on the posters boards in the Sunday school room.

CHURCH WHEEL CHAIR

A few weeks ago we realized that for 2-4 years we have not seen the wheel chair that Herb Becker donated to the church. Pastor Jim has been unable to shed any light on who last borrowed it. We are asking the members to think about it and to look around their homes. It may have been borrowed by a member for a relative who did not live with them.

If you have any information, please contact Linda Krause or Carole Kramer.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIPS

To enhance our sharing of Jesus’ love, a time of Fellowship is planned for the first Sunday of each month, following service, during the upcoming year. It would be appreciated if members of the congregation would share in providing for those fellowships. A sign-up sheet for each planned date will be on the bulletin board near the kitchen.

Shepherd of the Glen Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting
January 12, 2016

Attendees:	Pastor Susan Beck	Linda Krause	Anne Gellner
	Tom Corrigan	Jeff Gellner	Alice Corrigan
	Dennis Hunt	Beverly Biersdorf (Treasurer for 2015)	

The meeting was called together with prayer.

Minutes from the December 8, 2015 meeting were read and approved with two corrections.

Financial Reports:

The **Financial Secretary's report** was distributed.

For the week ending December 31, 2015:

Pledged Envelope Offerings:	\$77,504.00
Actual Envelope Offerings:	\$75,401.00 (97.3%)
Loose Offerings	\$1,570.66 (corrected amount: \$1,670.66) year to date
Building Fund	\$2,520.00 year to date
Fund Raisers	\$6,850.63 (corrected amount: \$6,825.00) year to date
Gifts and Memorials	\$ 50.00 year to date

Two corrections were made to the Financial Secretary's report.

The "**What did our congregation give in 2015**" report was distributed. The Thrivent Action Team contributions were added to the Relay for Life and Rte 1 Day Center projects.

The **Treasurer's report** was distributed.

December Envelope income:	\$ 6,405.00
Year to date total income:	\$88,977.86
Year to date total expenses:	\$82,647.81

- The Fundraisers amount over the \$7,500 budgeted was transferred from checking to savings: \$1,276.34.
- Building Fund moneys, \$1,440.00 were transferred from checking to savings making the total \$2,520.00.
- \$25.00 donation was given to the Lisbon Fire Hall for letting us be part of the Christmas Bazaar.
- Beverly Biersdorf and Tim Krause will check into why the Verizon bill is so high.
- Two checks of \$44.65 and \$608.97 were written against the Building Fund for replacing the lighting ballasts and repairs. Thank you to Dennis Hunt for doing all the repairs.
- Electricity line item came under budget by \$253.27.
- Thank you to Beverly Biersdorf for being Treasurer for the past few years. Job well done.

Financial reports were accepted with two corrections.

Board of Christian Education:

- Fellowships will be the first Sunday of the month generally, with occasional special days added in.
- Sunday school will continue until late May and start up in the fall (after the book sale). Remember that we need 2 teachers for each Sunday.
- There are sign-up sheets for volunteers for both activities.

Board of Trustees:

- A contractor was contacted to add a booster to one of the compressors to help it start. The compressor is working well now.
- Plans are to purchase a new water heater, the same model we presently have, and ask Matt Mader if he would be willing to install it.

-Trustees are planning on walking the tree line by the Neshawats and clean up all the broken branches.

Board of Deacons:

Worship Bulletin:

A detailed explanation was given about what it takes to produce the weekly bulletin. Because of the large amount of time it is taking for this process, it has been realized that changes must be made.

Information Gathering:

With the large variety of information for such things as the: bulletin, communiqué, calendar, volunteer roster, newsletter, etc, that needs to be gathered, Deacons recommends identifying a point person. Having this person would help to alleviate any information from not being included in the proper communications.

Point Person:

Description was given of the administrative tasks that have been taken on by volunteers.

Communion:

There was a discussion about not having enough volunteers to staff communion every week. A motion was made to have Communion on the first and third Sundays of the month and Festivals. Motion was seconded and approved.

The Deacons summed up: We will document the amount of time is required to complete the activities required to perform the additional duties that Pastor Jim was paid to do and report back next month. Then we will need to discuss a new paid position for the point person/secretary needed to sustain the operations of the church.

On an aside note, the printer is not functional. Since we are using Microsoft Word and Excel for the bulletin and calendar, the current software on the computer does not meet our current needs.

Pastor's Report:

- Preparation for sermons, worship planning, formatting bulletins. Held meetings with Anne and Alice for formatting.
- Christmas pageant on December 20.
- Planning/research for visioning Bible Study.
- Continuing to make contact with inactive members.
- Two pastoral care visits.
- Meetings with members to get acquainted.
- Attended Deacon's and Christian Educational meetings.
- Attended Baltimore west clergy conference meeting on December 16.
- Baptismal counseling on December 21.

New Business:

- Updated membership list was handed out.
- Tom Corrigan has set up a new website <http://www.sog-gmd.org> The cost the first year will be \$21 and \$250 for subsequent years.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer.

The next Council meeting will be held on February 9 at 7:00 pm.