

*Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
118 E. Mason Street
Lena, Illinois 61048*

Email: goodshepherdlena@outlook.com
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Carols and Caroling

Ever wonder when Christmas Carols and Christmas Caroling started?? Caroling, an ancient word that refers to dancing or singing songs of praise and happiness, was practiced during all seasons of the year in the Dark Ages and carols embraced a large range of subjects.

In the fourth-century the pope designated December 25th as the day to celebrate Christ's birth. There were some carols adapted to relay this message to the masses. The only problem was that the leaders of the church frowned upon the use of pagan music for songs with Christian messages. The first carols were soon banned by the church. Both the Catholic and Anglican churches controlled Christmas music for almost eighteen hundred years. Most Christians could not get very excited about the church music. The tunes of the church were rarely melodic, and all of them were written Latin, which the common people could not understand. So in the dark days of winter, the harsh and stiff Christmas music of the church offered little joy to celebrate Christ's birth.

In 1223 St. Francis of Assisi built on a tradition of constructing a nativity scene outside his church. He invited children not just to view the nativity scene, but to join him in the midst of it and to sing songs. Francis taught them songs that they could understand in their own language. The children so loved the songs, that they would leave singing and they would thus teach the songs to others.

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December 2024 Newsletter

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

118 E. Mason, Lena, IL 61048 Phone # (815) 369-5552

Thoughts from the Pastor

Greetings in Christ,

Cold December is one of the brightest and most cherished times in the church year. The splendid blue of Advent along with its message of love, peace, joy, and hope are evident in the Sanctuary, as is our glowing Christmas tree bedecked with those distinctly Lutheran Chrismons, symbols of our Christian faith. I encourage all of you to have a look at them when you have a chance to think about what they each mean, and don't be afraid to ask questions about them if you're not sure what some of them represent.

Advent is a time of beginnings, of reminding us of what the church is all about and how God comes to each of us to give us new life. During the time when the world around us is at its darkest, we rejoice in the light God gives us within the church as a family and within each of us individually. "Do not despair!" we are encouraged. Emmanuel, God with us, is here and is coming closer to us than ever before.

God with us, not just out there somewhere, but right here next to us and within our hearts. That is the message of Advent and Christmas. Jesus is born, not just a cute little baby like any other, but God himself – God from God, light from light, true God from true God – is born in our cold and dark world, to bring us all to God and to bring God, the giver of light and life, to us.

So let us look to that light, the true light that enlightens us all, as our beacon in the darkness and as our hope for all the goodness God gives us. December may be cold, windy, and snowy, but the warmth and the comfort of Jesus, God incarnate, wraps us in all the love we need.

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor Thomas

Thank You

A big shout out of thanks to Deb Hesselbacher, she arranged to have a truck come to Good Shepherd to have household supplies (linens, towels, etc.) sent to hurricane ravished states in the southeastern United States. We are grateful for your amazing effort, Thank You!

"Maybe Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more!" – *Theodor Seuss Geisel, How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

Source: *Town and Countrymag.com*

Highlights from November Council Meetings

All members of Good Shepherd's Council attended the Nov. 14, 2024, meeting.

Secretary's Report: The Secretary's October, 2024, report along with minutes from the special meeting held Nov. 3, 2024, the Secretary's Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Jay Andrews provided the October, 2024, treasurer's report. Figures included;
Gas Bill: \$246.00 Electric Bill: \$163.38

The report was unanimously approved following a motion.

Treasurer also provided a thorough review of all financial accounts and how proceeds can be used to operate the church. He also reminded Council that the laptop he is using is 15 years old and will no longer function fully. It is not capable of using current programs or being up dated. A replacement should be considered as soon as possible.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Tomas Mosbo provided his report of activities and hours for October. The report was approved.

Committee Reports:

Stewardship Committee: Coralyn Hudik described the meaning of stewardship and the involvement it suggests as part of her Stewardship Committee report.

Property Committee: Tim Gordon, president of the Property Committee, said a quote for a new sign to replace the existing sign at the front of the church has been received. The \$5126 quote was too high to accept. Funds for a new sign are expected to come from memorial contributions. New gutters have been installed.

Scholarship Committee: Following a meeting of the Scholarship Committee, new wordage for future applicants was provided. Council reviewed the document and acceptance was tabled

A motioned to accept the committee reports was made, Council agreed.

Old Business:

Property Insurance: Council President Kristy Patterson stated the full yearly property insurance premium from Owners Insurance Company can now be paid up front for a savings of \$759 compared to making monthly payments. At a Nov. 3, 2024, special council meeting it was decided funds were not available to cover the \$6,665 full year premium. However, volunteer donations have come in from three people and the bill can be paid in full. Appreciation was voiced for the donations.

New Business:

Tim Gordon, Property Committee Chair, said a bid of \$2500 to trim trees tops brushing the front of the church was received. He suggested the estimate is too high to afford at this time and other avenues for the trimming will be pursued.

The annual rent donation for Lena Food Pantry is now due. Council approved this payment of \$600 following a motion funds will be taken from the Lucille Baker Endowment Account.

A motion was made to adjourn Council stood and recited The Lord's Prayer to close the meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Darci Meier, Secretary.

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Council Minutes
Special Meeting Sunday, Nov. 3, 2024**

A special meeting was called for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Council Sunday, Nov. 3, 2024, to discuss a potential cost savings for property insurance premiums.

Property Insurance is obtained through Owners Insurance Company who offers the option of paying an entire year's premium upfront at a savings of \$759 for the year. The full year premium would be \$5,906.00 compared to the total for monthly payments of \$6,665.00. It was pointed out by Treasurer Andrews that there is not sufficient funding in current accounts to cover the full premium. It was decided to continue to pay the monthly premiums due to funding limitations.

Respectfully submitted,
Council Secretary,
Darci Meier

**Treasurer's Report
Jay Andrews**

Incoming October 2024	\$4,268.10
Expenses October 2024	<u>\$8,299.70</u>
Net Income (Loss)	\$(3,031.60)
Income, Year to Date 2024	\$98,051.97
Expenses, Year to Date 2024	<u>\$90,864.49</u>
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 7,187.48



“Christmas magic is silent. You don't hear it—
you feel it. You know it. You believe it.” —

Kevin Alan Milne

source: spoonfulofcomfort.com

**Annual Reports Are Due
December 15, 2024**

Annual reports are required for each committee and organization of the congregation. These reports are assembled and made available to the congregation members prior to the meeting. The reports are the responsibility of the chairperson or offices. If possible, please type up the report and email it to:

GoodShepherdLena@outlook.com
in Word format.

Thank you.



*Come and join us
on December
15th for*

***“Caroling for our
Shut-ins”.***

*Please bring food to share for lunch then after
lunch we will go caroling.*





Good Shepherd's Children's Christmas Program

Children's Christmas Program will be held Sunday December 15th at 9:30am during Worship Service.

Practice will be on Saturday, December 14rd at 9:30am at the church.

Continued from page 2.

In the early sixteenth-century, Martin Luther embraced carols. He loved music and with the carols, written in the German language of the common people, he was able to bring many people into the church. Luther believed in the joy of Christmas and by bringing carols into the church, he brought the music to his congregation.

When George Frideric Handel composed his *Messiah* in 1741, it began to change the church's opinion of "modern" Christmas music. And when in Austria in 1818, a priest named Joseph Mohr and a teach named Franz Grugbr put their talents together to create "Stille Nacht, Heilig Nacht" (Silent Night), the church's acceptance of carols truly began. It still took the royal marriage of of England's Queen Victoria and Prince Albert of Germany in 1840 to bring carols out even more. Prince Albert loved to sing and he brought German Christmas carols to England. The Victorian Carols were sincere expressions of faith, joy, and the wonder of the holiday season.

Carols have brought peace for maybe just one day to the battle field. Whether it was the Franco-Prussian War, WWI , WWII, or other conflicts, carols have brought peace for a short time to a battle field.



Christmas Worship Schedules


You may join the service in-person or via Facebook Live.
All services will be recorded.

*Christmas Eve Worship Service
Tuesday December 24th, 7:00pm*

*Holy communion will be celebrated in this service.

*Christmas Day Service
Sunday, December 25th, 9:30am
With Christmas Carols.*

*Holy communion will **NOT** be served during this service.



Make-A-Smile cards for
Lena Living Center

Each month we will send cards to the Lena Living Center. This is a new ministry to share love of Christ to the residence in the nursing home. We are responsible for 10 cards each month. If you would like to help with this ministry, just bring cards to church by the 10th of each month. Please sign and include short encouraging words. Our hope is to make them smile!

December Birthdays

12-01	Jacob Doyle	12-17	Jim Kurth
12-01	Daniel Kurth	12-17	Anna Patterson
12-01	Noah Wenzel	12-18	Jean Engel
12-03	Penelope Price	12-20	Cyndy Shumaker
12-08	Amy Hesselbacher	12-21	Brian Kurth
12-08	Coltin Coonts	12-22	Wayne Kurth
12-10	Sharon Schlachter	12-22	Terra Kurth
12-10	Jarod Timms	12-23	Abigail Brinker
12-11	Ryan Fye	12-24	Paula Schoenhard
12-14	Chris Fahr	12-27	Tom Brinker
12-16	Dan Lawson	12-30	Lynn Lyvers
12-16	Cali Smith	12-31	Kenlee Price
12-16	Mary Freitag		

If we missed your birthday (or someone in your family) please call the office so that we may update our records!

"The holiday season is a perfect time to reflect on our blessings and seek ways to make life better for those around us." — *Anonymous*



We lift our prayers for

Lynn Lyvers, Jerry, Fern Harnish, Taylor B., Denny Bergmann, Rene', Paul Fahr, Gary Hudik, Brady Meier, Virgil Martin, Tena Rackow, Marilyn Fulfs, Richard Frietag, Todd Schlachter, Cyndy Schumacher, Duane Tessendorf, Connor Stadermann, Brooke, Jon Forsythe, Diane, Randy, Brian, Paul Heller, Janet, Ryse Stone, Nicole, Meghan and her baby, John, Chuck, Joyce, Terri, Tina, Julie, Jamie, Crystal, Katie, Christian, Anna, Abby, Karla, Jacob and his family, Richard Gordon, Kay, Shanna, Kathy, Charlie, Brad, Jack, Tina, Joe, Sue, Emma, Cindy, Lamar Hail, Connie, Rachel Collins, Hanna, Mr. & Mrs. Ron Heckman, Jeri, Allie, Al, Bruce Stewart, Pam, Caroline, Tina D., Howard D., Christine, Jim DeMontigny Jr., Anita, Eric, Roger, Larry, Linda Kruger-Kleckler, Libby Wuethrich, Norman, Vivian, Tina Cheeney, Dennis Bokemeier, Susan Anderson, Brenda, Sylvia Jones, Madilyn Yeager, Kara Allen, Christine Beyer and prayers for stroke patients. Pray for love, peace, comfort and hope of resurrection for the family of Curt Breneman.



Our Purpose Statement:

“As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.”

Dear Sisters in Christ,

On Saturday, September 21, 2024 the Southwest Conference hosted at Zion Lutheran Church of Kewanee, the 2024 Women of the ELCA Annual Convention. Forcing on the theme “God is our refuge” derived from Psalm 46:1, God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Members of the ELCA AmmParo Executive committee Dr. Ruban Duran and Christine Moolo spoke. Guest were present from Tanzania and India.

Women of the ELCA conference includes 138 churches our of 7 conferences with 56 participated, represented by 30 voting members and 41 guests.

Newly elected Officers and Conference reps., are as follows;

Jenna For a - President

Ruth Ann Hartman - Vice President

Kim Choin -Treasurer

Sheila Keene- Secretary

Carolyn Ciaccio - North

Debra Quinn - Northeast and Discipleship

Christine Beyer - Northwest

Sandy Wickerly - South

Sandie Swanson - Southwest and Triennial Promoter

Nancy Calif - West

Ann Terry - Stewardship

Pastor Julie Monnard - Assistant to the Bishop, Liaison to NIS Council

Sherry Morris was given a gift and thanked for her service as South Conference Rep.

Mark your calendar for upcoming events:

April 26, 2025 - Spring Women retreat hosted by; LOMC, Oregon, IL.

September 20, 2025, ELCA Annual Women Convention

Hosted by North Conference held at

Rockford Lutheran Church, Rockford, IL.

July 16-19, 2026 - Triennial Gathering held in Des Monies, Iowa. Location to be determined.

Pray for all your Conference Reps as they continue to do God’s work

Prayerfully consider going to meetings.

Remember active women group or not you are all welcome

Christine Beyer
Northwest Rep.

Offering Notes

Please be sure that any offering contribution you would like credit for this year, is received by the end of worship on Sunday, December 29, 2024. Any contribution received after that time will be credited in 2025. Thank you for your cooperation. In an ongoing effort to reduce expenses, your offering envelope number for next year may change. It is imperative that you write your name on your envelope so that you receive proper credit.

Your generosity and cooperation are very much appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sheila at (815)369-5101. Thank you.

Prayer Chain:

If you have a request for the Prayer Chain, please call the Church Office to submit your request at 815-369-5552. We are also looking for anyone who would like to join the prayer chain team. We send prayer through the phone chain and e-mail. You pray on your own and pass on to the next person in the prayer chain. God hears our prayers.

If you are interested or have any questions, please feel free to contact the church office.

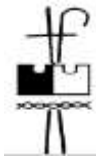
Pledge Card

This note is a friendly reminder, to please fill out the pledge card below.

Donations of any size will be highly appreciated.

Your offerings are important for Good Shepherd to continue our ministry and our outreach projects.

Thank you



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
118 E. Mason Street
Lena, IL 61048

2024 Annual Collection

As part of my/our commitment to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church I/we pledge;

\$ _____ Per Year \$ _____ Monthly
\$ _____ Weekly \$ _____ Twice a month
\$ _____ Quarterly \$ _____ Other

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Signature _____