

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 ALBANY SHAKER ROAD
LOUDONVILLE, NY 12211
518-458-1562



Office 518-458-1562

Pastor Rev. Jinney Vogel-Polizzi

Kathy Flynn Admin. Assistant

Kevin Wertman Custodian

Anita Andersen Music Director

Church Council:

Danny Patrick President

Mike Serge Vice President

Jeff Emptage Treasurer

Patti Kopach Secretary

Atif Dean

Nancy Layne

Kathryn Ingalls

Carol Phelps

Maryanne Sangiacomo

Elizabeth Sickler

Susan Spofford

Marie Wertman

Meg Winters

Mission Statement

“We are a community of God’s faithful people called by Christ to love, welcome, and care for all.”



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Contacts

| | | |
|--|--------------|-------------|
| Kathy Flynn, Admin. Asst. office@gscl.org | 518-458-1562 | Mon. – Wed. |
|--|--------------|-------------|

| <u>ADMINISTRATION</u> | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Financial Secretary | Marjorie Raymond |
| Assistant Treasurer | John McGrath |
| Bldg. Rental Coordinator | Danny Patrick |



| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Betty Cadwallader | Keith Kelly |
| Carolyn Wolfe | Kathy Ingalls |
| Keith Kelly | Marcia Bahan |
| Lynn Best | Lou Reiss |



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| <p>1 – Christine Kleinhenz, Maria Mackey 2 – Gail Koser, Jennifer Bradley, Simon Applewhite 4 – Nicholas Layne, Susan Perkins 9 – Johnathon Rudat 10 – Kit LaManna 11 – Jonathan Adams 25 – Sade Miller, Sunita Dean 28 – Colleen Ward 29 – Jane Ludwin</p> |
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PASTOR JINNEY'S MESSAGE

Dear Siblings in Christ,

The Christmas season is typically marked by expressions of joy, excitement, and happiness. It's a time for family and friends to gather and for churches to worship pointing to the hope that is found in the coming of the Christ child. However, this time of joy and expectation can often overshadow the pain and hurt that many are experiencing during this season when the world's merriment puts their grief and sorrow in stark relief.

At 6 pm on Friday evening, December 22nd a Blue Christmas Worship Service will be held at GSLC. Also known as the Service of the Longest Night, this liturgy focuses on offering prayers for those for whom this season is not a time of joy. For many people, the approaching Christmas holiday does not bring with it the joy and happiness that is advertised on television or in greeting cards. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, lack of or distance from family or friends, living with illness, or perhaps feeling pressured and overwhelmed by holiday preparations can result in parties and joviality becoming painful for many people in our congregations and communities.

One of the most extraordinary acts of pastoral care in the Advent season is to offer a service known as a Service of the Longest Night or a Blue Christmas Worship Service. It is a time of worship and reflection scheduled around the winter solstice (the longest night of the calendar year) and it just happens to fall on or around December 21st every year. Including this service amid the hustle and bustle of your other Christmas services, rituals, parties, and obligations is a tremendous witness to those who are struggling in our communities. It's a witness to them that the Christ child comes as a sign of hope in the face of despair. And it's a witness that their church is intentional about upholding members of the community in whatever season of life they may find themselves in.

This year, GSLC will be worshipping with Pastor Josh Evans and St. John Lutheran Church members during our Blue Christmas Service. All area church members and all members of our community are asked to join us in this sacred gathering.

Wishing you peace,

Pastor Jinney



Thank you to the Call Committee

I would like to thank all the members of the Call Committee for their commitment, dedication, and hard work. A lot of time and effort has been put forth since we began last September 2022.

Members of the Call Committee consisted of Steve Layne, Nancy Serge, Betty Suarez, Emmie Knobloch, Vince Pasqualino, and Paul Spofford.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Layne, Chair



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The children in Sunday School are preparing for the Christmas Pageant which will be held on December 17, 2023. And the book we are following for this story is Where Jesus Slept! It will be enjoyable for sure. We have picked an upbeat version of We Three Kings to be used along with the play.

Also, please note, that there will be No Sunday School on December 24, 2023 - Christmas Eve or the following week - December 31, 2023 which is New Year's Eve.

Besides all this going on, we do a Bible lesson and craft with the children each week. The number of children is growing and we have so much fun. If you have children, grandchildren or others that would like to attend, please bring them on Sunday mornings.

Thank you,
Nancy Serge, Nancy Layne & Marie Wertman

Don't Forget Our Homebound Members

Especially during these difficult times, please remember to send cards, and make phone calls to our homebound members.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Marcia Bahan | 1 White Fir Drive, Loudonville, NY 12211 |
| Lynn Best | 4 Knauf Lane, Loudonville, NY 12211 |
| Betty Cadwallader | Schenectady Center for Rehab, 526 Altamont Ave Room 515-B Maple, Schenectady, NY 12303 |
| Keith Kelly | 52 Old Birch Lane, Albany, NY 12205 |
| Shirley Kroll | 1232 Coburg Village Way, Rexford, NY 12148 |
| Lou Reiss | 82 Surrey Hill Dr., Latham NY 12110 |
| Dorothy Wimble | 38 Dowling Road, Albany, NY 12205 |
| Carolyn Wolfe | 119 Rockefeller Rd. Apt. 112, Delmar, NY 12054 |

Outreach and Evangelism

The next Outreach and Evangelism Ministry Team meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, **December 5 at 7:00** pm in person or on Zoom. We will be planning and gearing up for all events and activities during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. All volunteers needed and are always welcome!

WELCA NEWS

Good Shepherd's WELCA group will not be having their monthly meeting in December as they will be very busy with the "Cookie Walk." The next WELCA meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2024 at 6:30 pm in person or on zoom.



Mitten Tree

As in past years, we will be collecting mittens, hats and scarves for children in need. The tree will be in the narthex **beginning in December** as the holiday season begins. If you knit, please lend your talents and help those in need of items to help keep them warm. If you prefer to purchase and donate a new item, please do so!

Fellowship after Worship

Volunteers needed: Thank you for all who signed up to host our gatherings following worship this year. Please consider providing coffee and some small bite sized snacks by signing up on the chart right inside of the front doors. What a great time to meet each other and chat.

And.....don't forget to donate flowers on special dates to honor and remember your loved ones.

A Message From Danny Patrick, Council President



Annual Meeting of the Congregation

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church will be held on Sunday, January 28, 2024 after the worship service.

Please join us as we look back on the wonderful ministry that has taken place over the past year, and the exciting new things to come in 2024!

It's hard to believe but it's already time to prepare the 2023 Annual Report.

Please send in your committee annual reports

Deadline: Wednesday, January 4, 2024.



Cookie Walk Fundraiser

Annual Cookie Walk, scheduled this year for Saturday, Dec. 9, 9 am until "sold out" and is open to the congregation and the community.

The WELCA group started this annual event 5 years ago. It has gotten bigger every year with us usually selling out of cookies in just a few hours. The community looks forward to this event and we get so much positive feedback from everyone who attends. This is a major fundraiser for our ministries and many volunteers are needed for this to be a success. We need help setting up the evening before, during the sale and cleaning up afterwards. Even more help is needed in getting cookie donations. We expect to sell several hundred cookies that morning.

There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for cookie donations. This is just to give us an idea of what to expect for the sale. For this to be a success we need a large variety of cookies. We are asking for help from everyone in the congregation if possible. Please feel free to reach out to Marie Wertman with questions. Marie can be reached at: 518-221-6264.

Christmas at Sea

Every year the Albany Maritime Ministry provides Christmas boxes to the seafarers who come to port here in Albany. For those who will not be home for Christmas these Christmas gift boxes mean so much to them. It shows them that people care. We would like to support this “**Christmas at Sea**” program again this year.



Pease fill a shoebox with the following or similar items: toothpaste/brushes, men’s knit caps, gloves, pens, dental floss, shaving cream, razors, AA or AAA batteries, lip balm with sunscreen, deodorant, and post-it-notes. Most items can be purchased at the Dollar Store. **Please return the wrapped shoe boxes to the table in the narthex by Sunday, Dec. 10th.** If you have empty shoe boxes to donate, please bring them in and put them on the table.

Breakfast with the Wisemen



The Outreach and Evangelism Ministry Team will be hosting a Breakfast with the Wise Men on Saturday January 6th at 9:00 a.m. for children and their families, and anyone else who would like to come. The breakfast is free and we are going to obtain a Thrivent Action Grant to help cover the cost of the breakfast. We are hoping to get the children and families from the Sunday School as well as families from the community to come and have breakfast with the wisemen. If your family is planning on attending, please let Danny Patrick know by January 3rd or call the office with your RSVP. Also, we are looking for kitchen volunteers as well as folks to serve. Please let Danny Patrick know if you can help. We are hoping to get many families out for this breakfast.



The Worship
and Music Corner

The four Sundays of Advent begin **December 3rd**. Each Sunday we will light one candle, bringing us closer to the birth of the Baby Jesus.

Trimming the Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree in the sanctuary will be decorated on **Sunday, December 3rd** immediately following the worship service. Both children and adults are encouraged to participate. There will also be fellowship with refreshments.



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Loudonville invites you to join us in worship, music, and gathering together to welcome the Christ Child on Sunday, December 24th, 2023, in the sanctuary at 3PM.

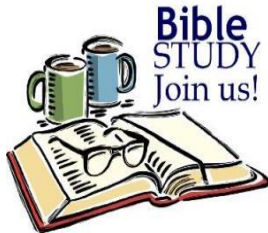
TECHNOLOGY TEAM REPORT

We continue to work on improving our AV equipment. On the Good Shepherd Facebook group, one year ago we had 187 members that follow our posts. That number has increased to 406! Every Sunday our Church service is posted so if you can't make it in person, you can watch the service on Facebook. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Layne



Wednesday Bible Study



Join us for the Wednesday Bible Study 1:00 pm – 2:15 pm in the church library or join by phone as we study Scripture and grow in God's word. Men and women are invited! Each week we begin in prayer, and then discuss the lessons relating to the upcoming Sunday worship service. Contact Bertie Cole at 518-698-8839 for current information about joining the group!

[Albany Lutherans Together: Compline For Advent](#)

*Wednesdays in Advent, beginning December 6, at 8:00 PM on **Zoom***

The ELCA congregations of Albany – First, Good Shepherd, Holy Spirit, and St. John's – invite you to a contemplative liturgy of compline (night prayer) for Advent, a season of hopeful waiting and watching before the celebration of Christmas. Each week will include song, scripture, prayer, and a reflection on God alive in the world through the life of a person commemorated that day: Nicholas of Myra, or "Saint Nick" (December 6); Lucy, of "Santa Lucia" (December 13); and Katharina von Bora Luther (December 20). Grab a copy of the worship booklet at church and join us online Wednesdays at 8 PM.

Zoom information: <http://firstlutheranalbany.org/zoom> or call 301-715-8592 or 929- 436-2866. The meeting code is 518-463-1326, the passcode is "1".

From the Financial Secretary

Members and friends of Good Shepherd continue to offer their time, talents, and treasures to support the ministries of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. If you would like to check on the status of your 2023 financial commitment, please contact Marjorie Raymond, Financial Secretary, at 518-424-6043.



Tithe.ly

ELECTRONIC GIVING IS SO EASY & CONVENIENT!

Our online giving continues to be available! More and more people are carrying around less cash, but that no longer means you can't make a donation to our congregation. You can go to our website www.gslcl.org via your computer or phone and make an electronic donation. You can also download the app from the App Store on your phone – tithe.ly. It's secure and easy. Try it out today.



Financial News

| Financial Report for October 2023 | | | |
|--|------------|--------------|--|
| | October | YTD | |
| Expenses | \$7,084.77 | \$97,783.77 | |
| Revenue | \$8,632.50 | \$86,327.77 | |
| <u>Surplus +</u> | | | |
| Deficit - | | -\$11,456.09 | |

*Donate here to
support the various
ministries of Good
Shepherd Lutheran
Church*





STEWARDSHIP NEWS & THANK YOU'S

The Stewardship Ministry Team that includes Carol Phelps, Mike Serge, Pastor Jinney and Danny Patrick want to thank everyone who made Gratitude Sunday (formerly known as Stewardship Sunday) such a huge success. On that day we received 30 financial commitment cards, which Jim Netzer, Synodical Authorized Minister, who was the worship presider that day blessed the financial commitment cards and gave a wonderful sermon on gratitude. The Gratitude Brunch was catered by Tovah Ortiz, who is the proprietor of The Press Food Truck and is one of our building users who uses our kitchen to prepare food for her business. The brunch was very good and well attended by about 35 people after the service. A big thanks goes to Patti Kopach who obtained a Thrivent Action Grant to cover the expenses of the brunch. In addition, as a part of the grant, Patti put out an appeal to ask folks to bring in items for the Christmas at Sea Shoeboxes that we collect for the Albany Maritime Ministry. Another big thanks for that day is to Marjorie Raymond who tabulated all of the financial cards that were received up to Gratitude Sunday. And last but not least a big thank you to all of you who helped clean up after the brunch.

On a few Sundays before Gratitude Sunday, we had a few folks who gave temple talks about the many things that they are thankful for at Good Shepherd. The temple talks were excellent, and we thank Dick Walker and Kiran and Atif Dean for providing these inspirational talks. During one service the children of the Sunday School passed out leaves for each person to write on them what they are thankful for. A big thanks to the children for doing this and to Nancy Layne for making the leaves.

Our Financial Secretary Marjorie Raymond has reported that as of November 28, 2023, we have received a total of 35 financial commitment cards totaling \$71,858. If you have not filled out a financial commitment card and you would like to, it is not too late to do so. We have financial commitment cards in the narthex (front hallway) and if you cannot find them, please ask the usher. You may put your financial commitment card in the offering or send it to the church office.

As you know stewardship is not about giving to a budget but giving back to God in response to all that he has given to each and every one of us. We practice good stewardship by how we use our resources, time, and talents in the many ministries of Good Shepherd and beyond. A big thanks to everyone for what you do and financially give to Good Shepherd regardless, if you submit a financial commitment card or not.

Overflow Homeless Shelter Meals

Again this year, the cluster churches now known as Albany Lutherans Together will be preparing meals for the Overflow Homeless Shelter at First Lutheran Church. The meal needs to be prepared for about 15 people and consist of an entree, vegetable or salad, and a dessert. The shelter is requiring no fish or pork, and it is not necessary to provide a salad dressing with the salad. It has worked out well when three people prepare a meal so that no one is doing the entire meal.

A special thanks goes out to Nancy and Steve Layne, their daughter-in-law Ameer Layne, and Ameer's mom Mary Ellen Lauren who provided the shelter meal for November. Out of the five meals left for this shelter season we just need folks to provide the meal for February 20 and April 16, 2024. If you could provide any one of these two meals, please speak with Danny Patrick and he can be reached at (518) 477-5353. As always thank you for your support of this special ministry.



The Fund-Raising Ministry Team is making plans for our Pork Dinner on January 20th from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Marie Wertman and Danny Patrick are coordinating the event and Marc Kleinhenz will be cooking the meal. Also, we will be having a local entertainer, Sam Piccolino, playing the piano and providing wonderful music during the dinner. So please save the date and if you can help in any way with the dinner, please talk to either Marie or Danny. See you at the Pork Dinner on January 20th. More information about the Pork Dinner will be in the midweek messages, bulletins, and the January newsletter.



**Don't forget to
Order Your Holiday Poinsettias**

An order form is available on page 16, and in the church narthex for your holiday poinsettias. Each 7 ½" plant will be available for the cost of \$14 each. The deadline is **December 13th**. So don't delay!

Thank You

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Thank you to all of the donors from Good Shepherd and our surrounding community for our successful October 2023 blood drive with 30 donors. Each of these units of life saving blood has the potential for helping 3 patients with red cells, plasma and cryoprecipitate. Blood has no substitute making blood drives essential for patients needing any of these blood products. Patients are extremely thankful to anyone willing to donate the gift of life for their healing.

Good Shepherd's next blood drive will be April 2024, exact date not available at the time of this writing. Will be published as soon as confirmed. Thank you to all our faithful Good Shepherd and community donors. Each donor is able to benefit 2-3 patients.
Carol Phelps, Coordinator

Many heartfelt thanks to Steve Layne and Mike Serge for donating the Christmas tree this year. Appreciation as always to Steve Layne for acquiring the tree and transporting it to GS.

As I'm sure you all noticed, the church entrance looks amazingly beautiful this year with wreaths for the front doors to ring in the holiday season. That is due to **Laura Szesnat's** generosity on behalf of Constantine's. We are always so grateful to Laura for all she does for Good Shepherd!



The autumn décor was spectacular also. Many thanks to Paul and Susan Spofford, and Kathy Flynn for the beautiful mums that also helped make the outside and inside beautiful for Reformation Sunday.

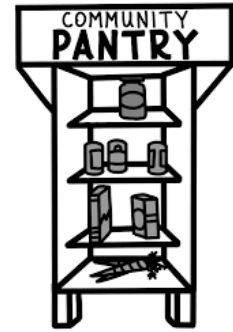
Remember - send in your updates for the January newsletter. Deadline: Wednesday, December 13th!!



Community Food Pantry

Good Shepherd's food pantry for our community outreach is regularly accessed, so we know it is needed. It is to allow members of our congregation to leave non-perishable food items for those in need. A few guidelines though:

- *No glass - Accidents happen and we don't want glass in the parking lot.*
- *No liquids - these tend to freeze and will spoil food in the cabinet.*
- *No ready-to-eat items - snack bars or candy.*
- *No cleaning products - again they may contaminate food.*
- *Diapers, dry formula, powdered milk, toilet paper, are always in need. But please do not attach receipts to formula or diapers.*
- *Please check to make sure the food is not spoiled or out of date.*
- *Very few canned goods will freeze.*



Thrivent Grants

The many outreach projects of our congregation are made possible in large part by grants from Thrivent Financial. Every Thrivent member is eligible to apply for two \$250.00 Action Team grants per year. These are easy to apply for, and if you need help please ask Danny Patrick.





THOSE WHO SERVE 12/3 – Jim Netzer, SAM

Opener Mike Serge
Greeter Nancy Serge
Usher Mike Serge
Lay Reader Laurie Pasqualino
Communion Assistant Marie Wertman
AV Tech Emmie Knobloch
Closer Marie Wertman

THOSE WHO SERVE 12/10 – Jim Netzer, SAM

Opener Jeannette Harting
Greeter Jeannette Harting
Usher Danny Patrick
Lay Reader Dick Walker
Communion Assistant Patti Kopach
AV Tech Elizabeth Strohbeck
Closer Atif Dean

THOSE WHO SERVE 12/17 – Rev. Andrew Nelson

Opener Patti Kopach
Greeter Patti Kopach
Usher Paul Spofford
Lay Reader Rob Beach
Communion Assistant Meg Winters
AV Tech Marie Wertman
Closer Rob Beach

THOSE WHO SERVE 12/24 – The Rev. Jinney Vogel-Polizzi

Opener Steve Layne
Greeter Dick Walker
Usher Mark Silo
Lay Reader Maryanne Sangiacomo
Communion Assistant Paul Spofford
AV Tech Maryanne Sangiacomo
Closer Meg Winters

THOSE WHO SERVE 12/31 – The Rev. Jinney Vogel-Polizzi

Opener Emmie Knobloch
Greeter Maryanne Sangiacomo
Usher Dick Walker
Lay Reader Danny Patrick
Communion Assistant Bertie Cole
AV Tech Steve Layne
Closer Steve Layne

| ~ December 2023 ~ | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--|---|--|---|
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
| | | | | | 1 Drama Kids(FH) 9:30 Colonie Srs. (BR) | 2 |
| 3 9:30 WORSHIP 10:45 Tree Trimming | 4 | 5 12:30 Colonie Srs. 7PM Outreach & Evangelism | 6 1 pm Bible Study | 7 12-3 Colonie Srs (BR) 4pm Drama Kids | 8 9:30 Colonie Srs. | 9 COOKIE WALK 9AM UNTIL SOLD OUT |
| 10 9:30 WORSHIP 10:45AM Congregational Meeting | 11 NO FUNDRAISING MEETING | 12 12:30 Colonie Srs. 6:30 Church Council | 13 1 pm Bible Study | 14 12-3 Colonie Srs (BR) 4pm Drama Kids | 15 9:30 Colonie Srs. (BR) | 16 |
| 17 9:30 Worship & Christmas Pageant | 18 NO WORSHIP & MUSIC MEETING | 19 12:30 Colonie Srs. | 20 1 pm Bible Study | 21 12-3 Colonie Srs (BR) 4pm Drama Kids | 22 9:30 Colonie Srs. (BR) | 23 |
| 24 3:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship No 9:30 Service | 25 | 26 12:30 Colonie Srs. | 27 9am Colonie Srs Board meeting 1 pm Bible Study NO PROPERTY MEETING | 28 12-3 Colonie Srs (BR) 4pm Drama Kids | 29 9:30 Colonie Srs. (BR) | 30/31 |

2023 Christmas Poinsettias Order Form

Each 7 1/2" Pot is \$14.00

To order, complete this form below and deposit, with your check or cash, in the box provided in the narthex. If you prefer, send it to the church office.

The order deadline is December 13

(Please print clearly)

Your Name: _____

No. of Plants: ____ x \$14.00 = \$

(Make checks payable to Good Shepherd)

Please **print** the requested information below:

IN MEMORY OF:

IN HONOR OF:

Office: 518-458-1562