

The Shepherd's Staff

Easter 2020



Church of the Good Shepherd

The Building is Closed but Our Hearts are Open!

**April 27-May 15 - Acton Food Pantry
Food Drive**

**April 30-May 15 - Deadline for Lowell
Transitional Living Ctr. Rainbow Cards**

**May 17 - *An Altar in the World* Adult
Formation begins after the 9:00
am service**

**May 20 at 7:30 pm - Hop, Skip and a
Jump Through the Bible**

**May 29 - The World We Want to Create
banners turned in**

**May 31 at 8:30 pm - Parenting Group
via Zoom**

New interactive Shepherd's Staff with live links,
enjoy exploring!

Contents

Interim Minster	2-3
Wardens' Message	3-4
During Our Interim	5
Worship	5-6
Christian Formation	7 - 9
Mission Outreach	10 - 14
Pastoral Care	14- 15
Administration	16
Passages	16-17
If you need to contact	18
Calendar of Events	

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Episcopal Diocese
of Massachussets

A Word from the Fold

*“Consider the lilies of the field how they grow,
they neither toil or spin,
yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory
was not clothed like one of these.”*

Matthew 6:28b-29

Dear Friends of
Good Shepherd,

Alleluia!
Christ is Risen!
He is Risen indeed!
Alleluia!

Lately it's been hard to remember that we are still in the Easter season and that it lasts through the 50 days following the great celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord. Each day seems to fold into the next and apart from the schedule of Zoom

meetings, it's sometimes a challenge to keep track of what day it actually is. And yet, somehow the heartbeat of life continues; the sun comes up each morning, the moon in the sky at night. Spring flowers push up out of the darkness of the winter soil, and trees that stood bare are showing signs of life in little green buds sprouting from their tender branches. This is indeed a time to consider the lilies of the field and all the precious signs of Spring, as the earth enjoys a chance to breathe again.

For all the difficulties of this global shutdown - of which there are so many - it is impressive what the global community has done in its efforts to break the spread of COVID-19. Before this pandemic, I could not imagine that the roadways and skies would be so quiet and still; that the hustle and bustle of life would be brought to a virtual halt. Yes, I remember the Blizzard of '78, the stalled out cars on the highways and the blanket of white that covered New England, but that now pales in comparison to the present state of affairs.

There are lessons to be learned from this experience and an opportunity to move forward with intention and care, so as not to simply jump back to the way things used to be. We have before us a moment to “consider the lilies of the field” and think about this as a metaphor for the bigger picture of life and the future we'd like to create. It's an opportunity to think about what's important in this life and grab on to the good will that many people have so creatively shown in this most difficult time. Think of restaurants, an industry hit particularly hard by this shutdown, how they have rallied to the cause providing meals to hospital employees and other essential workers. People teaming up, though socially distant, to make masks and shields with whatever items they can find to assist medical personnel. Teachers and educators who almost overnight have transformed their classrooms to an online learning program. The creative ways parents and teachers are finding to celebrate this year's graduates who likely won't make that memorable walk across the stage to receive their diplomas. We've seen birthday brigades organized by parents to bring some cheer to children having birthdays in this time of quarantine. The list goes on and on.

We as church also have much to consider as we think about what worship will look like when we come back together. How will we continue to reach those who for a variety of reasons may not be ready to come back to the building? What will church school look like in the future? Indeed these are the kinds of questions that the leaders of our churches and the Diocese are considering as we reimagine what it means to be church

and how to celebrate the sacraments in this new reality? I look forward to exploring these topics with you in the weeks and months to come. In the meantime, continue to take good care of one another, offer prayers for all in need, and keep being the loving

and generous community of faith that is a hallmark of the Church of the Good Shepherd.

In the peace of Christ,
+Melissa

Senior Warden's Message



What a paradoxical time we are living through! I have heard the variations on the phrase “close together while apart” and #alonetogether. I can relate to that juxtaposition. It is strange to be working from home all the time, but I feel strangely connected with my colleagues at the same time. I miss being able to go to stores and it’s frustrating

when shelves are empty and when one has to wait to enter a store, but I feel oddly satisfied when I eat up what’s already in the refrigerator or freezer. My hair is growing long; I thought I’d find it annoying, but I find I kind of like it for a change!

Of course, I feel incredibly fortunate that I have not (to the best of my knowledge) had coronavirus and the people I do know who have had it are thankfully on the road to recovery. I continue to be employed, unlike so many. I feel sad to see empty restaurants, theaters, playing fields. I wish I could

see my daughter and see her graduate this month. I feel terribly sad for the high death toll and fearful about the risk of catching it, for myself and for those I love.

But when I am not sad, I am quite the opposite. It’s inspiring to see how adaptive and creative so many can be, from building field hospitals in large arenas, using 3-D printers to make face shields, moving classrooms online, to mobile parades to help people celebrate 100th birthdays while retaining social distance. Of course, at Good Shepherd, Melissa has mastered “Zoom Church” with the help of Deborah for music, and John Buono, Harry Peebles, and others behind the scenes. I am proud not only of our adaptive worship but also of our food drive for the Acton Food Pantry, the outreach for the Lowell Transitional Living Center, and our ongoing relationship with El Ocotillo in El Salvador.

Let’s be gentle with ourselves as we live through these difficult times, but let’s also stay involved, creative and together. The opportunities abound and there is joy to be found, close to home.

Faithfully,
Lydia

Junior Warden's Update



While the coronavirus is creating all sorts of challenges for us, our church building has been suffering its own plagues and using up our major repairs budget for the year.

First in January we discovered some mold in part of our lower level,

mostly on the walls of our furnace room and a storage room. Affected lower sections of wallboard in those areas were quickly removed, and Melissa met with three different mold remediation specialists to look at the whole downstairs area. All agreed that we had removed all visible mold, and even if there might be more in the walls, the safest course of action, with the lowest risk of contamination, would be to do nothing more. To follow up, we hired a mold testing company who took air samples in several areas downstairs and outside the building for comparison. The results of

those tests showed a normal, low level of mold spores. (Please note that there are always mold spores in the air, even in clean interior spaces, and as long as moisture is controlled, mold spores do not develop into mold.) We will need to increase our dehumidification of the downstairs in the future to prevent additional problems.

To remove the mold, a section of the downstairs hallway wall was cut out, so we hired Bill Allen of Countryside Painting to repair the sheetrock and repaint this area. Because the whole area needed painting, we now have fresh paint in the entire transition area from the robe closet in the lower level up the stairs and around the elevator. Bill also repaired water damage below the dormer at the back of the narthex. To finish up, he repaired sheetrock in the women's bathroom which was cut into to make heating repairs over a year ago. So when we get back into the church building, quite a few things will look better!

One last task Bill did for us was check out some rotted wood in the Sunday School. Unfortunately, this turned out to be a significant termite infestation.

Melissa again took the lead and met with six different pest control companies and got recommendations on treatment. At time of this writing, we are hiring a pest control company to deal with this problem. We now need to repair and repaint in the rooms where the termites were discovered, and to replace damaged exterior trim where the termites entered.



To conclude on a positive note, gutters at the rectory were recently installed, finally completing the repairs and improvements to the rectory that we started last year. And, have you noticed the new signs around Acton giving directions/distance to the church? Many thanks to Emmanuel Aronie who managed to scrape off the old paint and repaint the posts and scroll arms, so they look as good as the new aluminum signs! If you'd like more information about any of this property work, feel free to contact me.

[Jessie Panek](#)



During Our Interim

Search Committee Report

The challenges and difficulties that each of us has been dealing with since the spread of the Covid-19 virus have also affected our search process. When the self-isolating and other constraints came into play, our committee was told by the Diocese that we must suspend all of our activities. At that point we were about to start doing on-line interviews, but it was felt that the candidates were probably dealing with trying to meet the needs of their particular parishes, and those challenges might lead them to not

be at their best in an interview.

The committee has continued to meet via Zoom to keep up on any further direction from the diocese. We have now been given the go ahead to start the interviews, and we have some very strong candidates. The Lord knows who is the best candidate for us, so we ask your continued prayers for discernment and wisdom as we enter this exciting phase of the process.

Faithfully,
Ellen Harland,
for the committee.

Worship

Worship During Covid-19

Though our church doors are not open at this time, worship by the Good Shepherd community is alive and well! With the help of Zoom, we have continued to gather in an on-line virtual community. Currently, there are three worship opportunities during the week that include Sunday mornings at 9am, Wednesday mornings at 7:30am and Thursday evenings at 8pm. We have been following the liturgies of Morning Prayer and Compline for those services. And though Zoom meeting is not ideal for simultaneous group participation, we have found it to be beneficial for our needs in many ways.

First is the fact that it enables people to see one another on screen and while that can never

replace in person contact, it has been helpful to keep connected in this time of social distance. Seeing each other's faces and knowing that you are there is of great comfort to me and to the congregation.

A second similar benefit of the Zoom meeting is that folks have the opportunity to interact with each other in a virtual coffee hour at the end of the service. People have shared updates about friends who are absent from the call or dealing with a health challenge, or shared news about neighbors making face masks for anyone in need. This time of open conversation is yet another blessing.

A third benefit is that Deborah is able to add to the worship by playing the organ or piano live in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. This detail makes for better sound quality than playing a



recording of the hymns for the day. That being said, what you hear on the receiving end is dependent upon your home wifi/cable connection. Deborah and I have been working to select more familiar hymns so that people can sing along. We look forward to once again having guest musicians share their talents in worship. Ray Lyons and Deborah have been rehearsing some beautiful anthems that they will share in the weeks to come.

It has been an adjustment for us all to worship with the Morning Prayer liturgy. Several of you have expressed to me how much you miss the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. I share this feeling with you and find this to be one of the most difficult elements of this online experience of church. Please know that it is my intent to return to the Holy Eucharist setting in the weeks to come. The initial hurdle of getting a wi-fi connection in the sanctuary has been temporarily fixed. These past several weeks, we have been getting up to speed with learning the ins and outs of broadcasting the service over Zoom and tackling the glitches that seem to pop up regularly. However, we will have the



celebration of the Eucharist soon in keeping with the following guidelines from the Diocese (excerpt from the Bishops' March 25 COVID-19 communication to clergy):

"If Holy Eucharist is celebrated for live-streamed services, the celebrant alone should receive the sacrament (understood as receiving on behalf of all the people) or the celebrant should abstain (understood as sharing in the fast of all the people). Others present for the videotaping or broadcast should not receive. In place of the Invitation ("The gifts of God..."), the following Prayer of Spiritual Communion, as used at Washington National Cathedral, is recommended: My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen."

In the meantime, I thank you for your continued prayers and support as we find our way in this virtual church environment. If you are having difficulties in signing in to the Zoom meetings, please reach out to me or [Harry Peebles](mailto:hlpeebles@gmail.com) (hlpeebles@gmail.com). I welcome your suggestions of favorite hymns you would like to sing in the remainder of this Easter season. Please continue to zoom with us and feel free to invite your family members and friends, sharing with them the Zoom link to join with us in giving praise to our God.

Rev. Melissa Buono



Good Shepherd Music

*O Thou, the primal fount of life and peace,
Who shedd'st Thy breathing quiet all around,
In me command that pain and conflict cease,
And turn to music every jarring sound.*
J. Sterling



My hope is that, although not gathered together in song, we are all making music nonetheless, be it humming a hymn of faith as we go about our daily chores or by whistling a favorite tune whilst planting seeds in the garden.

Choir member Jesse Cox provides in-house entertainment by singing over the PA system at work! Judy Piermarini is practicing singing by using

the Hawaiian alphabet which has only 12 letters!

I pray we begin again soon to gather together in the Lord's House, lifting our voices in praise to him in hymns and spiritual songs.

[Deborah](#) Colageo

Service Schedule

Sunday 9:00am: Zoom Morning Prayer

Wednesday 7:30am: Zoom Morning Prayer

Noon: Virtual Lunch via Zoom

Thursday 8:00pm: Zoom Order of Compline

Christian Formation

CGS Parenting Group

Last month members of the CGS Parenting Group met for our first online session since the social distancing policies went into effect. With children all nestled and snug in their beds, parents signed on to Zoom at about 8:30 pm one Sunday evening for some conversation and an opportunity to unwind together. There wasn't an organized topic of discussion beyond providing the chance to check in with each other and share how families are coping in this unusual time. For the most part, parents are doing their best to take things one day at a time. However the work-at-home and distance-learning certainly has everyone feeling a bit stretched. And yet, in the midst of helping one another in their challenges, there were plenty of moments for laughter and encouragement. The end result was that even from a distance, we found connection with, and offered support for, one another. We look forward to our next **gathering on Sunday, May 31 at 8:30 pm.**

Exploring the Scriptures A Hop, Skip and Jump through the Bible

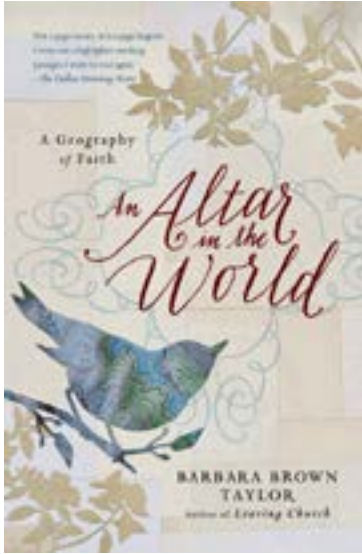
Last month we had an Earth Day focus for our Bible Study. We looked for guidance as to how we can begin to heal our planet using the teaching Jesus gave us about serving God rather than wealth. Thank you to Carolyn and Andy Platt for contributing their experience and knowledge of environmental issues to the evening.

This month we will be **meeting via Zoom at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, May 20** to continue our exploration of the scriptures. The calendar has changed from our original list of dates so please stay tuned for each month's offerings and to the Good Shepherd eblast for the readings and topic of the month. Also check out the eblast for the link to the Zoom meeting.

We hope to see you there. All are welcome!

[Bev](#) Ridpath

Adult Formation



Online Adult Education will continue on Sundays after worship beginning **May 17** with a study of *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* by Barbara Brown Taylor.

When asked in casual conversations about faith, people often say that they are spiritual but not religious. While it can mean different things

to different people, the phrase is often invoked as a way of saying “I have a belief in the spiritual things of life, but that belief isn’t grounded in a church community or denominational affiliation.” In the introduction of her book, *An Altar in the World*, Barbara Brown Taylor, says people share this phrase with her when they discover in conversation her religious background.

Taylor is an Episcopal Priest, a Professor

of Religion at Piedmont College in Georgia, as well as a best-selling author and a theologian. She sees that people have a yearning to be connected with the Divine but are so busy chasing after experiences out in the world that they miss the holy presence that is right in front of them. In her book, *An Altar in the World*, she takes the reader on a journey of discovery to live with purpose and pay attention to the world we live and move in, finding faith beyond the walls of the church.

Please join us on **Sunday mornings starting May 17 after worship** as we read and discuss *An Altar in the World*. Her easy to read style and personal stories make this a great book to explore as a group. You can purchase the book from Barnes & Noble and Amazon or buy it locally from the Silver Unicorn Bookstore in West Acton or other local book retailer. Several libraries offer online check out services for books via Hoopla or OverDrive. The book is also available at Audible.com and is read by Barbara Brown Taylor herself. We will be using a couple of online study guides that offer questions for discussion. Each chapter is self-sufficient and does not require you to commit to attend every session. For more information, please contact Rev. [Melissa](#).

Church School

Church School Update

Christian education for the youth of Good Shepherd continues throughout the church’s closure. I have been reaching out with ideas and activities for all grade levels on a weekly basis. A special thanks goes out to Pastor Melissa, the church school teachers, and Carol Brady for their contributions and support.

The messages to families have included general and specific recommendations. Lent provided an opportunity for more general reflection and prayer as families prepared for Easter. There were suggestions for interactive activities such as drawing and walking a chalk labyrinth and creating a prayer chain with a link for each day of Lent. Journaling and walking were also highlighted during this time.

Holy Week and Easter began with the cel-



bration of Palm Sunday through the creation of homemade palms and showing the story of Jesus’s journey. During the week families were encouraged to find expressions of peace as well as explore the mysteries and joys of the Crucifixion and Resurrection through stories and an egg hunt.



As Easter continues, offering ways to see and hear the weekly Gospel is an important aspect to each week's message. Younger children can find creative outlets while the older kids can engage in higher level thinking through reading and reflection. There are ways for each student to connect with their class's curriculum. Additionally, I try to find different ways for families to talk together about faith and the Bible stories.

It's a huge understatement to acknowledge the strangeness and stress of this time. Each person and every family has varied and changing challenges

and limitations. There are many pressures on all of us, but hopefully the church school outreach is not one of them. It's meant to provide support and guidance. Its goal is to be helpful and meaningful. We miss seeing all the families and look forward to joining together again in the future.

[Taryn](#) Ross-Hyman



Mission Outreach

“We are called to be the change we want to see in the world by honoring human dignity and seeking to improve the rights and conditions of people locally, nationally, and globally.”

Mission Outreach during a Pandemic

Although Mission Sundays have been put on hold during this time of virtual services, our outreach continues during this critical time. The pandemic has inserted itself into all the corners of the world and the vulnerable populations we serve are often hit the hardest.

Barb Magee

The Acton Food Pantry

The Acton Food Pantry is in great need of food to support the many families experiencing financial pressures during this pandemic. See Food Drive information on the previous page.

The Acton-Boxborough High School class of 2020 was supposed to play a class-wide Assassin Game as part of senior activities, but due to the coronavirus pandemic, it was cancelled. Instead, the class voted to donate the \$1,255 they had collected to the Acton Food Pantry. Here is a link and a picture of

CHURCH OF GOOD SHEPHERD
April 27 – May 15

Fill the shelves at Acton Food Pantry
Drop your food in the collection boxes at the church
entrance



Current needs:

Cereal	Boxed Milk: dairy, soy, almond, oat	Paper towels
Oatmeal	Boxed rice	Toilet paper
Pasta	Soup	Tissues
Spaghetti sauce	Canned meat	Diapers
Mac&Cheese	Baking ingredients	Wipes

****please check the “sell by” date on all products****

Mission Outreach Calendar

April 27- May 15	Food Drive for Acton Food Pantry
May 3	Mission Sunday: focus on Acton Food Pantry
May 15	Rainbow Cards for LTLC
May 8 – May 29	“The World We Want to Create” Parish Project

teen church member Carolyn giving the Acton Food Pantry a check. To see the whole article, Click [here](#).



Lowell Transitional Living Center & Rainbow Cards

“I am hopeful that the worst is here and we will start to see a rainbow soon”
(Amy - Case Manager LTLC)

Last week I sent a note to Amy DeAngelis at Lowell Transitional Living Center which I have posted below:

Hi Amy,
I'm writing on behalf of Church of the Good

Shepherd and wondering how things are going at LTLC. I know that Rev. Melissa Buono had an exchange with Andy last month and was told things were very difficult at the center. We are wondering if there is any way we can be of support and/or offer some relief of any kind? If so, please let me know and I will pass it on to our church community.

LTLC is in our prayers and we value our long term relationship with you. Please know that we are here for you and would like to know how we can engage with you in some way during these challenging times.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

*With my best regards,
Helene Gagliano*

Amy wrote back to me:

Thank you so much for reaching out. I hope you, your family and the community at The Church of the Good Shepard are all well and staying healthy.

I am going to be honest, the past few weeks have been rough at the Shelter. First, with clients getting sick and testing positive with Covid-19 and then last week learning that 5 of our key staff members have tested positive as well, Andy included in that count. Over the weekend everyone, staff and clients alike were all tested and we are just awaiting the results....

In the meantime it's pretty much business as usual. The PA's continue to work the front desk and the case managers are servicing clients remotely as well as assisting the PA's at the shelter at least one day a week.

Please continue to keep us all in your prayers.



I am hopeful that the worst is here and we will start to see the rainbow soon.
Best, Amy

As you will see, the center is having a very difficult time with staff members testing positive for the Covid-19, including the director, Andy McMahon. Amy asks that we continue to pray for the center and at the end she writes, “I am hopeful that the worst is here and we will start to see a rainbow soon”.

Last fall we donated clothing to LTLC along with some beautiful notes from the children in the church school . The notes offered encouragement and love and were handed out at the center. It occurred to me that along with our community prayers, we offer an assortment of rainbows cards with words of inspiration, love and prayers for the people who work and live at LTLC.



I encourage everyone in the community to create as many cards as they like which I will then deliver to LTLC. There are no requirements other than something that reflects a hopeful message with words of encouragement during this difficult time. It means so much to the residents of LTLC to know they are not alone. I have left a box for the cards out-



side the entrance of COGS and would like to deliver them by **May 15**.

Also, If you'd like to make a monetary gift, please send your check to The Church of the Good Shepherd with ‘LTLC’ in the memo and I will deliver those funds when I bring the rainbow cards.

I thank you in advance for your generosity and look forward to bringing an abundance of love and hope from our COGS family.

Helene Gagliano

“The World We Want to Create”

What changes do we want to make in our world as we climb out of this pandemic? Are there things about these last few weeks you would like to hold onto? Are there big systemic faults you'd like to fix?

Join us in a parish-wide art project proclaiming the world we want to create. Design a pennant with your message completing the sentence, “The world we want to create.....” We will hang them from the ceiling of the outdoor entrance to the church for the Sunday we reopen.

There is a wonderful video of a man reading to his son about the world before and after the pandemic. To view it, click on the link and go to the title on the screen that matches the link name. The [Realization](#). It's just wonderful and inspiring.

Pick up a pennant at church. Plan your message: keep it short and visually bold so it is easily read. Use Sharpies (available at church also), applique, fabric, etc. **Return it to church by May 29th.**

Barb Magee



El Ocotillo

As reports of COVID ratcheted up in the US, we were touched to hear from six students in El Salvador, and also from Fundahmer, with their concerns for us. Fundahmer/Cebes is the in-country NGO that facilitates the scholarship program, builds leadership programs for the students, and hosts our delegations. El Salvador was one of the first Central American countries to respond to COVID 19. Its March 22nd lockdown has severe restrictions and, although deemed by some to be for the health of the nation, Human Rights Watch documents a tremendous number of arrests without cause and rights violations. Our students' translated letters are [here](#).



The university students are all home from school working virtually, and lower school students receive assignments via WhatsApp. Internet access can be difficult in the village. We are grateful that, in recent years, all of the households have access to water. This is not the case for many other rural communities, an unimaginable hardship when fighting a contagious virus. You can read two of the letters from students on our website.

The wonderful staff at Fundahmer are all working from their homes. **All delegation trips have been cancelled.** This presents a huge financial hurdle since the majority of their funding comes from delegations. You can make a donation directly to Fundahmer through their US based 501c3 organization: FACES PO Box 5411 Wayland MA 01778.

San Lucas Episcopal Church, Chelsea

The pandemic has been especially horrific in Chelsea. This week Fr Edgar Gutierrez sent us a pho-

to and message about the importance of our message of solidarity sent to them in August.

"We are coping as best as we can. Some of our families have been directly affected by COVID-19, no fatalities yet. I am surrounded by a wonderful cloud of angels (volunteers, colleagues) that provide help and support."

"I just wanted you to see for yourself that we have the banner so thoughtfully and beautifully made by Good Shepherd to us! It got Alan Gate's attention during his March 1st visitation. This is also a way to send all of you a big THANK YOU for it, and to send you our warm greeting, hoping you all are well. Stay safe, and blessings to you."

*Sincerely in Christ,
Fr. Edgar and the congregation of St. Luke's-San Lucas,
Chelsea MA
Carol Guterrez*



What Is Life Like At Esperanza Academy During Co- vid-19?

A blog post from Jadi in the early days of quarantine:

Dear Friends,

On the toughest days, I step out of my office and I walk through the halls and classrooms of our school. There are few things that bring me as much comfort as observing our girls laughing and being joyous. It instantaneously centers me and reminds me of the importance of our collective work.

We look forward to the day that we can return to 198 Garden Street. Until then, please consider

making a gift to our annual fund as we continue to bring joy to our girls virtually.

*In Gratitude,
Jadi*

Go to Good Shepherd's [Home](#) Page to see a short video from Esperanza Academy featuring a teacher's update and an excerpt from a student's COVID-19 diary.

Esperanza Academy Covid-19 Emergency Fund

Thank you for supporting Esperanza Academy and the girls we serve. Your donation will provide the necessary funds we need to assist our students and their families who are facing food insecurity, internet insecurity, and other unforeseen challenges as a result of COVID-19. [Click](#) to donate or for more information.

Donations to Emerson Hospital

Good Shepherd parishioners answered a call

to donate needed masks and disinfectants to Emerson Hospital. Thanks to the several Good Shepherd folks- some anonymous- who dropped off supplies for COVID 19 preparation. Here you see the last contributors (yay Harland's) before the supplies were taken to Emerson.

Carolyn Platt



Pastoral Care News

Pastoral Care Committee

The Pastoral Care team has had a quiet time during the Coronavirus shutdown. When it became difficult to go to the supermarkets to buy food, it wasn't a good idea to send our team members out to do that and perhaps expose them to the germs. If a real emergency had arisen, that would be a different story, and we would meet the need. Luckily, there weren't any emergencies. The couple of people who might have benefitted from a dinner all expressed their wish not to infect any cooks by sending them into stores on their behalf. And, everyone who may have benefitted from a meal did have someone who could help out, either in their house or a nearby friend or relative. That may not have been as convenient as having meals dropped off, but safety seemed to be everyone's key concern. A number of people on the PCT fall into a higher risk category for the Coronavirus so we were very short-handed.

This is a good opportunity for you to consider joining our team. Anyone who would like to join us, or wants more information about join-

ing the Pastoral Care team please contact [Kathi](#) to do so! With more people sharing the work, more demands could be met. The two main areas where help would be most appreciated are making dinners for those sick or homebound for any reason and giving rides to people who have appointments but cannot drive themselves.

We have a list of Backup Angels whom we can call to help during a crisis – for example, if there's a long-term illness or crisis situation, and the need for a couple of meals a week continues for longer than usual. Our list of PCT members has declined due to people moving away or having their own health issues. **If you would like your name to be added to the Backup Angel list, please click on my name.** It would be greatly appreciated by everyone!

Thank you very much, [Kathi](#) Haney

Help solve the Prayer Shawl mystery.....

But first, we have a nice variety of prayer

shawls in our cabinet in the library. If you know of someone who would enjoy the comfort of a prayer shawl, during these difficult times please contact [Diane](#) Cooke, who will help you choose a shawl and deliver it to you. There are two large bins of already blessed shawls from which to choose. And remember, they are not just for those who are ill; they are for those grieving, the weary, the fearful and those in any kind of need who need to be surrounded by prayer.

Please be sure to sign the sheet on the bin lid so we can keep track of how many shawls are being distributed!

Now on to the mystery....



Early in the new year, a lovely, long, narrow, medium blue prayer shawl appeared in a white plastic bag in the prayer shawl cabinet. It was elegant with popcorn, large cable and various other stitches.

After being blessed at the altar, it was very quickly chosen for delivery to an older gentleman. We would love to thank the creator of this remarkable prayer shawl! Please call Nancy Brown at 978-263-2014 if you have any clues!

Thank you, Nancy C. Brown

PS. If you have any finished shawls: please call the office and leave a message for Laura asking her to let you know when she'll be there, and you can drop them off them.

Good Shepherd Prayer Chain in the Time of Covid-19

COVID-19 Epidemic Prayer Requests

Church of the Good Shepherd has a long history of prayer and action for those in need. During this time of the COVID-19 outbreak, our Prayer Chain members invite you to submit the name(s) of anyone in need of prayer whether they have symptoms or have tested positive, have been exposed to the virus, have a job that puts them in danger of being exposed, or if they are struggling emotionally or financially. We have been praying by name daily for those who are ill, those awaiting test results, those working in healthcare and essential services as well as for those at the Lowell Transistional Living Center and our friends in El Ocotillo.

If you would like to add someone to our Prayer List, click [HERE](#) to give us their name (first or full name) and let us know their prayer need. Our Prayer Chain will keep all prayer requests strictly confidential. If their situation changes, or they no longer need prayer, please use the same link to update us on their status.

If you, or anyone you know needs prayer for other reasons we will happily lift your concerns and requests to God for you. Every request is kept in strictest confidence. Please click here, let us know your need or thanksgiving, include names or keep it anonymous, and we will send it on to members who have volunteered to pray for your requests for up to two weeks. The Chain is a way to send concerns quickly and to share updates or a word of thanks.

If you like to pray for others and would like more information or want to join the chain, contact [Margaret](#) or [Jane](#).

Margaret Geanisis

Administration

Treasurer's Report

Through the end of March we are slightly be-

hind our budget (by \$6,228). The largest contributor to this is a shortfall in pledge receipts which we believe will be made up over the course of the year. That shortfall was however partially offset by a lower

than budgeted cost for snow removal.

Please note that while the building is closed, we are still collecting mail and processing pledge payments that are sent in by mail. Having your regular pledge payments mailed through your bank's bill payment service can not only help automate your payment but also save you a trip to the post office.

Denise Kelly,
Treasurer

Changes to the Shepherd's Staff

You may have noticed some changes in this issue of the Shepherd's Staff. The church has updated its InDesign program as the one we were working with was 9 years old! Now we are able to create links to connect with a program leader if you have a question or want to sign up, to request a prayer shawl or prayers by just clicking on a name, we have links to news paper articles, and a video! In addition we have bookmarks so that if you want to go directly to an event or section, you can just click on that section in the table of contents and go directly there.

We hope this enables you to be more informed and involved, and makes for a more interesting and enjoyable experience. Hopefully the next issue will have a new format and look. So stay tuned...

Margaret Geanisis

Some Information About and Graduates in the Passages Section

As you may know, the Passages section of the Shepherd's Staff usually contains sacramental events in the lives of our parishers, and graduations. The ban on public gatherings makes it difficult to have most sacramental events at present. For now, we will include births, marriages and deaths of members and family members.

Because many of our church family are graduating this year, we'd like to plan to feature them a bit more than in other years. If anyone has a family member who will be graduating high school, college or receiving advanced degrees we would love it if you could send [Margaret](#) their name, graduation details and a photo; if they've got post-graduation plans that would be nice to include, as well as any awards or honors which they achieved/received. I will need them **by June 15**.

Please note, this is for members who attend Good Shepherd only, not grandchildren who are not involved with Good Shepherd.

Margaret Geanisis

Administration

Births

Emily Adams Prunier was born on February 8 to Diane and Josh Prunier. She was 9 pounds 3 ounces and 21 and a 1/2 inches.



Kaylen Arthur Moten was born on April 27 to Hayley Brock and Derrick Moten. He was 7 lbs at birth. Kaylen is Laura Brock's first grandson.



Deaths



Former Good Shepherd parishioner, **Julia Stevens**, 86 of Brunswick, ME, died peacefully on March 28, 2020. Julia attended the School of Nursing at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston and became a registered nurse. While at M.G.H.,

Julia met Joseph (Joe) W. Stevens, an engineering student at nearby M.I.T. who became her husband. They moved to Acton and raised their children here, Julia was active in various town organizations as well as serving as a selectman from 1974-1979. After receiving her Master's Degree in Community Health Nursing, she taught nursing at university level, as well as working in supervisory public nursing positions for several different agencies. Julia adored music, and sang in our choir for many years, and taught piano to many local youngsters. She and Joe retired to Harpswell, ME where she once again became very active in the community and in various public health boards.

She is survived by her five children, Katherine Napoli, John Stevens, Elizabeth Stevens, Matthew Stevens and Mark Stevens, and many grandchildren and great-grand children. Due to the pandemic, a Memorial Service will be scheduled in the future.

Ellie George shared a memory of Julia:

At one time, maybe in the 70s, the Stevens family lived in a large Victorian house on Windsor ave in West Acton. As a fundraiser—for I do not remember what—there was a tour of older acton homes. Julia's home was included in the tour, and I remember the house sparkling with antiques and flower arrangements and our hostess Julia dressed, in a period costume

It was wonderful to see the house, as it would have been in the post Civil War era. I was so pleased that she shared her home

Ellie George



Augustina Mendoza, 88, of Littleton, MA and loving wife of Carlos Mendoza, passed away peacefully on Sunday, April 5th, 2020, She was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and received her IB degree from the Immaculate Conception

Institute in Buenos Aires. Fluent in seven languages, Tina worked as a translator and interpreter. They raised four children in New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Eventually she studied at BU and Harvard Divinity School, as well as learning Hebrew. She later volunteered in hospice.

Augustina is survived by her husband Carlos, her children Alex Mendoza, Clarice Shirvell, Jane-Marie Norton, and Mark Mendoza and 11 grandchildren, including Daniel. Due to the pandemic, a Memorial Service will be scheduled in the future.



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper