

The Shepherd's Staff

October 2021



Church of the Good Shepherd

Our story inside these pages

Oct. 3 at 8 am & 10 am - Holy Eucharist

Oct. 3 at noon - Blessing of the Animals

Service in the Parking Lot

Oct. 10 at 10am - Church School Begins!

**Oct. 20 at 7:30 - 9 pm - Hop, Skip and
Jump Bible Study**

**Oct. 24 at 8 & 10 am - Celebration of Our
Relationship with the People of El Ocotillo**

Oct. 24 at 10 am - Church School

Oct. 31 - No Church School

Nov. 7 at 8 & 10 am - All Saints Day

Services are in the Sanctuary & on Zoom

Don't forget to sign up each Sunday

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Shepherd, Acton**

Episcopal Diocese of
Massachusetts

A Word from the Fold



This month's Word from the Fold is the sermon Rev. Ellie preached on September 19, our first in-person service since the pandemic began.

Good morning! And welcome home to Good Shepherd. For many of you, the last time you gathered in this space for worship was back on March 8 of 2020. Since then, so much has changed. And I don't think any of us could have anticipated how long it would be before we would hold services here again. It has been a long 18 months.

Back then, you had a different celebrant, a different music minister, and a different deacon. Ellen, Ken and I were all serving other parishes. Since then, Good Shepherd has changed. The world has changed. We have changed.

And change can be uncomfortable. We humans like certainty. We like to know what to expect — and what is expected of us. One of the hardest things about living in the midst of this pandemic has been not knowing what to expect. Not knowing what is safe. Not knowing when and how things would return to normal.

Today marks our beginning of a return, but not necessarily a return to “normal.” Our experience of church and worship — today, and in the time to come — will not be the same as it was. Some of that is intentional, perhaps to be expected, with a new rector and liturgical leadership. Some of that is due to the pandemic, and the measures we have put into place to ensure as safe a gathering as possible. Some of the changes, we hope, you will find welcome and life-giving. Others may cause frustration, or annoyance, or even sadness as we return to discover all that has changed. We'll need to be patient with one another.

I expect that over the next few months, as we get back into the habit of coming to church again, we'll all be balancing many different emotions. And that's ok. God did not create us to move through life unaffected by things around us. We can be excited to be here and exhausted by the preparations it took to make it happen. We can rejoice to see our church family in person at the same time we worry about those we are not seeing. We can embrace change at the same time we miss the way things used to be.

Just yesterday morning, I presided over an interment of ashes at Mount Hope Cemetery. The family asked me to read from Ecclesiastes 3, the beautiful Scripture that reminds us “for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” And as I was reading the list of all those balanced phrases — a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to break down and a time to build up — it occurred to me that these things don't always happen in perfect balance, as opposites. Sometimes, they occur in the very same season. Birth and death together. Mourning and dancing. Seeking and losing. Keeping and throwing away. Tearing and sowing.

And, it seems to me, this is such a time.

Our return to in-person indoor church this morning is a joyous occasion. It is so good, finally, to be here with you and with those whom we are delighted to share worship with through Zoom. I know how you have hungered to be back here in this familiar and beloved sacred space. Yet, it is also a poignant occasion. Many of those you used to see here are not with us — and some may not be coming back. We have lost people. To death. To relocation. To other habits and uses of this time on Sunday mornings. And it is going to take time and effort to rebuild. We cannot just throw open our doors and expect the people to appear... to return.

Today, a new life together is born, even as a part of us has died. Today, we plant new seeds, even as we pluck up what was faithfully planted long ago. We dance and we mourn all at the same time.

And through it all, we trust, that God is with us. We trust that there is a reason we are here. That this parish is here. That there is a reason we have been called together to be the church in this place, at this time. Our call.

Our mission is to discover and proclaim it to all who long to hear it.

Our Collect for this morning asks God to help us not be anxious about earthly things, but to love things heavenly — a prayer we could pray every day! To hold fast to those things that shall endure, even while we are placed among things that are passing away.

I love church, and this church in particular, because it is here that I learn how to do that. Where I learn how to hold on to those things that shall endure... to those things that will help me survive this hard, ever-changing life, this frustrating pandemic. I want people to come here and be among us because I believe we have something worth sharing, worth proclaiming. Because God is up to something pretty darn amazing in our midst.

What might that be?

It might be that here is where we learn how to love. How to forgive. How to sing of a joy greater than ourselves. It might be that here we learn how to make the world a better place — where justice and human dignity are valued. Where we find our voice to speak out against racism and bigotry. It might be that here we are fed with the spiritual food that brings us solace and strength, pardon, and renewal when we need it. Where we learn to parent our children, and raise them with values that endure. Where we learn to care for our elders and tend to the sick. It might be that here is where we develop a faith that will guide us through the hardships and joys of life.

Why are you here? What draws you back?

Why should others bother to join us?

Jesus taught his disciples hard truths. He told them things they did not always want to hear. Things like “the Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and after being killed, he will rise again.” He spoke of things they did not understand. About death and resurrection. Things that scared them.

And because they did not understand, because they were scared, they missed the good news. They did not hear the hope. They lost sight of the promise.

Three times in Mark’s gospel, and for the second week in a row here in church, we hear Jesus predict his own suffering and death. And that’s the part that sticks with his followers. That’s the part that scares them, that leads them not to greater understanding, but to an argument about which of them is the greatest. They always forget about the resurrection!

About the promise that Jesus always leaves with them — that after three days he will rise again.

I think that’s an important promise for us to remember at this juncture in our life together, too. We are, perhaps, somewhere in the midst of those three long, metaphorical days between the end of one way of being and the beginning of another. Some things about our life together have died. Some things may not be coming back. The pandemic has changed our church. But that does not mean it is ended. It may, in fact, mean we are on the brink of resurrection.

At our July Vestry meeting, I shared a reflection on the difference between resuscitation and resurrection (as offered by Dr. Melissa Perrin at a recent Clergy Day). To resuscitate someone, or to resuscitate an institution like the church, is to bring it back to what it once was, to revive someone or something and attempt to return it to its former state. But it’s not a permanent solution. It’s not true healing, but a return to what was before.

Resurrection, however, is different. It’s Jesus’s way: A life-altering experience, after which things will never be the same. Resurrection, by definition, implies death. Certain things must die in order for new life to take hold. As one clergy colleague reflected:

“Following, say, a pandemic in which everything we’ve known and clung to for generations has been flipped over, you can attempt a resuscitation. But even if you’re able to temporarily resuscitate your church, it will eventually still fade away. That’s simply the nature of resuscitation.” It looks backward, rather than forward.

“Resurrection...[on the other hand], is the model... the church must embrace in order to move forward in a post-pandemic world. As much as we might hope for it to be so, things will never fully return to the way they once were — not fully anyway. And so we must reflect upon that which has died, name it, grieve it, and then embrace new models of being church in the days, months, and years ahead.” (The Rev. Tim Schenck)

I think that is the call before us. To return, yes! To rejoice and regather. But also to reflect, to mourn, and to invite the resurrection to take hold. Jesus spoke of death. Of suffering. Of the end. But he also promised resurrection. And after he told them these things, he took a little child and put it among them and taking it in his arms he said to them, “Whoever

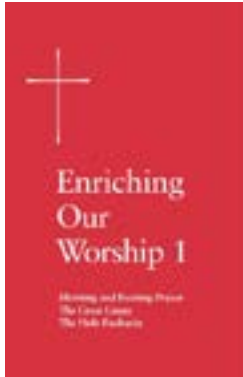
welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me,
and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the
one who sent me.”

Sounds like a good way to begin. Don't you think?
Amen.

Rev. Ellie +

Worship

Worship Liturgy



Our Sunday liturgy from now until Advent is taken from Enriching our Worship, Eucharistic Prayer 2. The liturgies in this collection have deep roots in our Episcopal liturgical tradition, while offering expansive imagery and metaphors. As noted in its preface, “in some cases the canticles and prayers represent the recovery

of ancient biblical and patristic images, such as the identification of Christ with Wisdom, and in other cases [they offer] images which speak of God in other than familiar masculine terms... Expanding our vocabulary of prayer and the ways in which we name the Holy One bear witness to the fact that the mystery of God transcends all categories of knowing, including those of masculine and feminine.”

Rev. Ellie +

Blessing All Creatures Great and Small

**Blessing of the Animals,
Sunday, October 3 at 12 noon
in the parking lot.**

Please join us for our adapted annual service in commemoration of St. Francis Day. This year, the **Blessing of the Animals service will take place at 12 noon after our regular Sunday morning services on October 3.** We'll gather in the parking lot for a short liturgy, followed by a personal blessing of all pets in attendance. For those whose pets are unable to join us in person, please bring



a photograph to be blessed. We'll also bless stuffed animals and have a Book of Remembrance to honor those beloved pets we have lost.

For everyone's convenience, all dogs should be leashed and smaller pets should be in carriers.

Rev. Ellie +

Service Celebrating 20 Years of Sister & Brotherhood with El Ocotillo

On **Sunday, October 24th, during both morning services**, we will celebrate our relationship with this beautiful village in the mountains with music, a video montage, poetry, and prayers. We hope that you can join us in person or via zoom. Zoom link can be found on our [website](#).



Sing to the Holy One a New Song



I began my ministry at Good Shepherd as your pastoral associate for liturgy and music just a few short weeks ago. First of all, I want to honor and thank you for welcoming me with such warmth, openness, ease, flexibility, and good humor. It is a joy to embark on this journey of faith that

we share together in community.

Throughout this month the phrase from the psalter, "*Sing to the Holy One a new song!*," has been echoing in my heart. I believe all of us are called at this moment in the life of our planet, the life of our country, the life of our parish, and in our own family and inner lives, to "*sing a new song.*" Last Sunday we moved back into the sanctuary for Sunday worship, but we are there in new ways, and a new future is unfolding in our midst. We are all learning new songs, and new ways to sing them.



A beautiful group of singers has jumped right in to support the song of the gathered assembly at the 10:00 am Eucharist. **We meet at 9:15 am to warm up and go over the day's music.** Everyone is welcome, whatever age you are and level of choral experience you have. Showing up for this half hour of practice is a great way to get acquainted with me and how I approach liturgy and music. I'd be delighted to welcome you there. You are free to check it out anytime. In October we'll get going with a more extended rehearsal during the

Service Schedule

Sunday

*8:00 am Holy Eucharist

*10:00 am Holy Eucharist, also live streamed on Zoom

Wednesday

7:30 am Morning Prayer via Zoom

Thursday

8:00 pm Compline via Zoom

* Must sign up in advance, link on our [website](#)

week. Stay tuned for details.

I look forward to getting to know you in the coming months, and exploring together how we will sing God's new songs in this new era in our church. How will we build one another up by singing together, and help that miraculous energy overflow beyond our current boundaries? Opportunities, especially for children, a multigenerational pop-up chorus, incorporating our parish instrumentalists, special projects with the handbells, and of course the Christmas season Lessons and Carols service all beckon with promise. It will be a matter of discerning how and where to focus, prioritize, and leverage our efforts.

For now, I invite us all to simply breathe a little deeper, relax and enliven our bodies a little more fully, and let loose from our souls with the song God has set vibrating within us. What is your new song?

Ellen Oak,
Pastoral Associate for Liturgy & Music

Would You Like to Be a Lector?

Do you enjoy reading aloud? We always need more people to read the weekly lessons during the Sunday 10 am service. Being a lector is an essential part of the Sunday service and it's a minimal commitment as you get to choose the dates you are

available. Lectors can read in-person from the sanctuary or via the Zoom app from wherever you are. How convenient is that?

I typically send the readings to the week's lectors the Thursday before their Sunday slot, so they have time to review the lessons and feel comfortable with the text. I use Sign-up Genius for scheduling which is very convenient for readers and for me.

One of the things that I find fulfilling about being a lector is that I spend some time reading through the text and get more of a personal understanding of the particular lesson. Additionally, I do not consider myself someone who is comfortable with public speaking, but knowing that I am reading to a loving and supportive group of people is uplifting, and any anxiety I may have felt washes away.

Please reach out to me by email (dfbaum@gmail.com) or at a Sunday service. Hope to have you join in! Debby Flint-Baum

Altar Flowers

Now that we are back in the sanctuary for worship, it would be nice to have altar flowers once again!

The way it works is that a family (or person) signs up to [donate the altar flowers](#) on a given week. The family also provides a dedication for the



bulletin, whether it be in memory of someone, an anniversary wish, or for other reasons. We are trying something new. Just click on the above link to sign up via "Sign-Up Genius" which will provide dates that are available. Just sign up, and I will contact you. In addition, you can always e-mail me. I have spoken to the owner of Concord Flower Shop where we have been getting the flowers. She has agreed to keep the price of the arrangement to \$50 with an additional \$12.50 delivery charge. After the service, the flowers are typically given to a parishioner in need.

Please contact me with any questions.

Diane Cooke

Door Greeters Needed!

Hello from the greeters/newcomers committee. Now that we are resuming in-person services, our current roster of gracious greeters has ebbed a bit, so we need more church members to consider giving greeting a try, or sign up again!

I began serving as a greeter in 2017, taking up the helm to organize our team. What I find amazing is how much I get back in the simple act of opening the doors, saying good morning, the act of welcoming. It truly is a gratifying ministry.

Church members and newcomers arrive alone, as couples or as family groups. Once they reach the entrance to the church, the rush to get out of the house, piling into the car, hustling up the walk, fades away. Peace, fellowship, and contemplation await inside; I open the doors with a smile and offer a cheerful good morning, guiding them in.

Greeters are church members who have



volunteered to stand at the front door, on a rotating basis, to greet everyone, but particularly newcomers, attending the 10:00 am Sunday service (and at other times for special services).

Two primary goals of this vital ministry are:

1. *To identify and serve the needs of those are new to our church community, whether they are one-time visitors, church shoppers, or potential regular attendees. Everyone in the congregation has the responsibility for making newcomers feel welcome.*
2. *To help the pastor and relevant committees identify and serve the needs of current parishioners.*

Greeters stand at the front doors of the church, beginning at around 9:45 am, greeting each individual or group that arrives. We encourage our members to wear their nametags, and if possible, identify who might be a visitor that day. Visitors are encouraged to sign our guest log, and after the service, make them known to the Pastor.

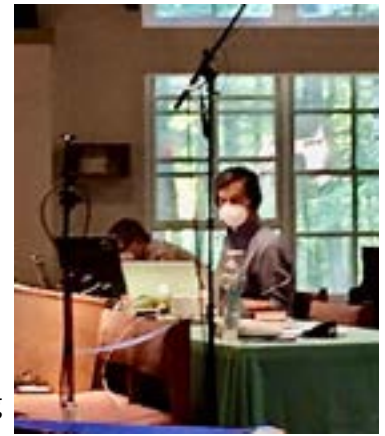
During the passing of the peace, we try to make a point of greeting newcomers (even if they weren't the ones we met at the door). If necessary, we ask another congregation member closer to the newcomer to extend the hand of peace.

A three-month greeter schedule is set each quarter, and, this year, we are only requesting one greeter at each 10:00 am service, rather than two, as was the previous arrangement. Greeters are also asked to participate in holiday services.

Please contact me or Andy Platt, if you are interested to learn more about this very vital ministry.

Wendy Feddersen

have spent so much time outside of our comfort zone, we have learned a new truth. The Good Shepherd community is not limited to those people who can be in church for Wednesday Morning Prayer or Sunday



Eucharist. We are not limited by the bounds of geography. God has stretched our understanding of who we are. And who we can be. Technology has allowed us to include parishioners who are confined to home, or who are away on vacation, or have moved across the country but haven't yet found a local parish. Live, two-way interactive hybrid (local & remote) services have shown us new ways of being in community, how we can support one another, and how we can invite newcomers to taste the experience.

Over the next weeks there will be rough patches as we figure out how to make everything run smoothly and address the needs of all. The Tech Team strives to make the mikes, cameras, and cables as unobtrusive as possible for those worshipping in church, and at the same time provide a completely accessible and immersive experience to those participating from afar.

Jon Panek for the Tech Team

Tech Team

What drove it home for me was watching parishioners walk up to the altar rail to receive communion. The morning of September 19 was the first Sunday worship service in 18 months that felt close to "normal". Rev Ellie and Deacon Ken led the service supported by Ellen and the choir. Although the acolytes haven't yet been reconstituted we even had a procession and recession.

It's likely God doesn't pay much attention to these details but they do help put us mortals in a mindset conducive to worship. Because we





Worship
Back in the Day
When We Were
Outside



We're Inside now!



Christian Formation



“Members One of Another”

Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

Friday, Nov. 12, 2021

Save the date and spread the word!

As part of our Diocesan Convention weekend, everyone is invited to take part in Friday programs for our whole diocesan community.

All sessions virtual and **OPEN TO ALL**

Option to participate Friday evening via in-person deanery gatherings may be offered depending on COVID-19 metrics. Stay tuned!

Plenary & break-out sessions: 1–3:45 p.m.

Plenary session: The Rev. Lydia Kelsey Bucklin, Canon to the Ordinary for Discipleship and Vitality, Diocese of Northern Michigan, followed by six break-out sessions exploring our interdependence as members of the Body of Christ



Associated break-out sessions:

- Tell Me a Story of Where I Belong
- Worship: God’s Invitation to Heal from Loneliness and Disconnection
- Interdependence in Action: Sharing Ministry and Mission through Collaboration
- Repair/Renew: Mending as Spiritual & Institutional Reform
- In Those Days There Was No King in Israel: Exploring Non-Hierarchical Community Leadership
- Building a Beloved Community of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Holy Eucharist: 5–6 p.m.

Guest preacher: The Rt. Rev. Douglas J. Fisher, Bishop, Diocese of Western Massachusetts

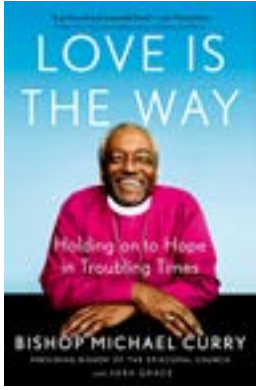
Evening program: 7–8 p.m.

Keynote speaker: Dr. Catherine Meeks, Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, Diocese of Atlanta



For more details and to register, visit:
www.diomass.org/diocesan-convention-2021

Adult Christian Formation



Our next adult study will focus on Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's book *Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times* (2020).

We will begin our discussions in November, at a time still to be determined once we become accustomed to the rhythm of in-person worship. If you think you would like to attend, it would be helpful to know whether you prefer to gather on Zoom, or if you would consider gathering in person after church on Sundays.

Bishop Curry's book explores "the seemingly insurmountable challenges facing the world today: poverty, racism, selfishness, deep ideological divisions, competing claims to speak for God. This book will lead readers to discover the gifts they need in order to live the way of love: deep reservoirs of hope and resilience, simple wisdom, the discipline of nonviolence, and unshakable regard for human dignity."

The book can be ordered Amazon. It is also available on Audible and as an e-book from Amazon. We encourage you to begin reading it now. Please let me know if you are planning to join us and I'll make sure to let you know the details for

our first gathering in November.

Rev. Ellie+

Hop, Skip and Jump Through the Bible

We will be holding our Bible Study on Zoom on October 20th from 7:30-9:00 pm. The Zoom link and readings will be posted in the e-blast for two weeks before the meeting. If you are new and don't receive our E-blast, please contact the office for the information or to be added to our E-blast mailing.

Come and join us as we explore the scriptures and consider how they speak to us today. Each session is a stand-alone meeting so join us for whatever sessions you can fit into your schedule. All are welcome!

Bev Ridpath and Neal Ogle

Spiritual Parenting

Spiritual Parenting will be taking a hiatus as we reopen for worship services and Church School. Once things settle down a bit, we will reconvene. Look for those dates in future Shepherd Staffs and the E-blast.

Church School

First Day of Church School is Sunday, October 10 !!!

Church school classes are set to begin on October 10 during the 10am worship service. The second class will be held on **October 24**. Classes will meet thereafter every second and fourth Sunday of the month through next May. The

third Sunday will be reserved for Mission Outreach project efforts.

We are looking forward to reconnecting with families and helping to support the faith formation of our children. It is an uncertain and unfamiliar

time to be sure, but we will maintain open lines of communication and exercise patience and flexibility as we navigate the upcoming year. Above all, we are dedicated to caring for the spiritual and emotional well-being of our young people.



Keeping Your Church Schooler Safe From Covid

The set up for the classes will be slightly different than in years past in order to reflect the current Covid restrictions and guidelines. Grades K-4 will meet in the Parish Hall while grades 5-8 will meet in the church library, both rooms having many windows and large doors for ventilation. Students will be appropriately distanced and required to wear face masks. Teachers are required to wear a mask and be vaccinated. Teachers will advise on any mask breaks and regular hand sanitizing. Children will each have their own set of materials. We hope to provide an online connection to the lessons.

Our Curriculum

The curriculum for the 2021-22 school year will include *Godly Play* and *Building Faith* for the younger group, and *Feasting on the Word* for the older kids.

As our website states:

"the Godly Play classroom is a place for children to be themselves, to learn to live in a community, to come closer to the mystery of God's presence and to learn the language of the Christian people. Teachers act as guides to help the children use the language of religious narrative and symbols that will allow them to express themselves spiritually

and make meaning. Children are treated seriously and with deep respect. They are encouraged to do the work of discovering answers."

The Faith Builders program

"invites children to listen to ancient Bible stories, learning about the writers, characters, and places in Scripture. The children construct something from the story using Legos. As they build, they engage each other, sharing their thoughts and insights, wondering together about a different story each week."

For our older kids, *Feasting on the Word* follows the Revised Common Lectionary.

Teachers use the provided background information and various teaching styles to help children to delve into the who, what, where, so what and now of each biblical passage.

If you are interested in learning more about the programming and/or are able to help support the classes, please reach out to cgschurchschool@gmail.com. Additionally, information and resources are regularly updated on the church school website found at sites.google.com/view/cgschurchschool/home.



**Hope to see you on
October 10th at
before the 10:00 am
start of
Church School**

Church School Calendar

Oct. 3, 10 am - Eucharist

Noon - Blessing of the Animals service in the parking lot

Oct. 10, 10 am - Church School classes begin

Oct. 17 - Outreach Event

Oct. 24 10 am - Church School Classes,
Celebration of our El Ocotillo friendship

Oct. 31 - 10:00 am Eucharist

Nov. 7 - 10 am - Eucharist - All Saints Day

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.”

Help Needed Job Description:

Does it break your heart that families in our local towns struggle to put food on the table? Are you looking for a way to engage more deeply in meaningful volunteering?

The Mission Outreach Committee is looking for several people to lead a project that engages the congregation with a food pantry, creating a food drive and a volunteer experience that goes beyond donations during the weeks of Lent (March 2-April 17).

If you are called to lend a helping hand to



lead this endeavor, please reach out to Barb, Mission Outreach Chair or t.

El Ocotillo: A 20 Year Love Story

It's hard to believe that the first delegation from Good Shepherd to El Ocotillo was twenty years ago in 2001!! Some of today's scholarship students weren't



Mission Outreach Calendar

October 24: Celebration of El Ocotillo 20-Year Relationship
Special Worship at the 8 & 10 Eucharists

November: Lowell Transitional Living Center

December: Immigration

January: Esperanza Academy

born yet. On **Sunday, October 24th, during the morning services, we will celebrate our relationship with this beautiful village in the mountains with music, a video montage, poetry, and prayers.** We hope that you can join us in person or via Zoom.

“Encuentro Internacional”



On August 21st, Fundahmer, the Salvadoran organization that guides our scholarship program and delegations, sponsored a “Virtual Encuentro” or “Virtual Meeting” of all of its delegation groups. Jessie Panek, Kevin Gross, and Barb Magee attended and were astounded to see groups from across the United States, Canada, and Australia (where it was 1:00 am)! The highlight of the meeting was a tribute to technology when we had a half hour breakout meeting with 12 of our village friends who joined us



from the familiar porch at Claudia’s house where we eat meals during our visits. It was a great opportunity to catch up. Remarkably every one of them is vaccinated! School continues to be virtual for the older students and home study for the younger children.



Esperanza Opens to In-Person Learning

Esperanza Academy is a tuition-free middle school for girls in Lawrence MA. Good Shepherd has partnered with Esperanza since 2007. Visit its website <https://www.esperanzaacademy.org> to learn how the school is making a difference in the lives of its students and in the city of Lawrence.

Here is a letter to us at Good Shepherd from Gia Angulin, Director of Development at Esperanza Academy:

Here on Garden Street, we are so happy to have students back on campus. There is music,



laughter, and an abundance of joy throughout the building!

We kicked off the academic year with a school trip to Camp Nokomis on Lake Winnepesaukee. The students had a week of community building, water sports, and campfires. See attached photos.

In 5th grade, the students are reading Matilda, while 6th grade is exploring chemical reactions in Science class. Our 7th-grade students are reading "The Outsiders" and 8th-grade students are working on high school prep.

The extended day program resumes September 20 and students will be enjoying after-school activities with our community partners such as YMCA, Groundwork Lawrence, and Lawrence YDO.

It certainly is an exciting time here at Esperanza. We are so grateful for the parishioners of Good Shepherd. Thank you for your partnership in our mission. .

*In gratitude
Gia*



"Undies Sundies" coming in November

As most of you know, we have supported the Lowell Transitional Living Center (LTLTC) for many years. We are looking forward to a visit from Andy McMahon this November, with an update on how the center has been functioning throughout the pandemic.

Each year we gather and send new underwear, socks, undershirts, scarves, and hats to the LTLTC. We've also had fundraisers for specific items such as pillows, blankets, cots, and a commercial washing machine.

Due to the pandemic, we will once again be asking for "virtual donations" this year. If you



would like to support this ministry, we ask you chose a donation (listed below) and send a check directly to the Church of the Good Shepherd. Please write LTLC in the memo on your check.

I also encourage you to send a card (or cards if you'd like to write/make more than one) with words of encouragement to the staff and residents along with your donation.

Here are the donation options:

\$10 socks, underwear, undershirts scarves, hats

\$20 pillows

\$50.00 blankets

\$100.00 cots

(If you'd prefer you can also send checks/gift cards

for items that are not on the list above.)

I thank you all for your past generosity and hope that in this very difficult time, you will help sustain this ministry.

Helene Gagliano

Attention Prayer Shawl Creators

We have an acute shortage of full-size Prayer Shawls, (18-24" x 60-72"). People need to have them large enough to feel wrapped and enclosed in prayer, and people come in all sizes. Even though we haven't really been inside the church, the Prayer Shawls have been flying out of the containers.

We have an abundance of Prayer Lap Blankets and enough Children's Prayer Shawls, which is great.

If you are picking one up, please remember to call ahead so that Ellie can write prayer to attach to the shawl.

Want to join us in this rewarding ministry? Call Nancy Brown, or talk with Rev. Ellie.

Events

West Acton Oktoberfest

This past Saturday was the perfect day to be out and about town. There was a great turn out of people the at Oktoberfest, where we set up a booth to let people know all about Church of the Good Shepherd and our many minsitries.



Regathering Picnic

Our Sept 12 church picnic was a genuine joy. We had fabulous weather, delicious food and top notch company. About 55 of us were in attendance.

A very special thanks to ... Everyone who showed up (picnics without people are so boring). Everyone who brought potluck dishes (so many yummy choices). All the folks who helped plan, set-up and clean-up (many willing hands). The regathering committee for their good advice. Taryn Ross-Hyman for setting up the children's programming display. Diane Zimmerman-Decker, who did the bulk of the shopping. Margaret Haley, who did more shopping and loaned us the bocce set. Rafael Pupo, who made sure we had tables and chairs set-up. Doug Recko, our grill master. Gail Lyons, who organized the serving volunteers. All the folks who helped serve the food. Beverly Ridpath, who made sure the kitchen was back-in-order. All the additional people not mentioned, who did those big and little things that helped make it happen. All of our sidewalk chalk artists.

Let's do it again.



Committee News

Pastoral Care Team

I have always enjoyed being on the Pastoral Care committee because I like to help make life a bit easier for people in need. That's reflected in other volunteer work I do as well. When I fix a dinner for someone, I try to picture how they're feeling and what they're coping with, and it gives me satisfaction to know I can help in some small way. I try to take extra care in making the meal tasty and making enough for two nights; if there are children in the family, fun desserts might be nice! In any event, it's something I enjoy doing for others. I've been on the receiving end of this also, and it makes me appreciate the team all the more!

There have not been many articles written about the Pastoral Care team lately because there has really been no action! Hopefully, everyone knows that the PCT is very willing to prepare meals for people who are sick, recuperating from surgery, having a new baby, and other reasons along those lines. The PCT also is willing to give parishioners rides to and from appointments or maybe a necessary errand. We also like to pay visits to shut-ins or people who for one reason or another are perhaps limited in what they can do.

The PCT has tried to stress these things that we will do – plus we deliver prayer shawls; knit the beautiful shawls; deliver flowers; help families arrange memorial service receptions and then do the work of the reception.

The arrival of Covid 18 months ago made some of the things we do impossible – such as signing cards in the parish hall for people who are sick, grieving, are moving, etc. Meals were not made and delivered during Covid because people were understandably anxious about the possible spread of germs. Visits and rides were curtailed due to Covid.

Now that we may finally be – maybe! – turning the corner a bit with Covid, the PCT would really like to get back to doing some of the things we do best....like meals and rides. Maybe it's good if people really don't need much help; on the other hand, we're always ready to help, and feel sad that



we aren't being used to help the parish. If you would benefit from any of these activities we do, please let us know. For example, if you know you're having surgery, we will be happy to fix some dinners for you as you recuperate. Of course, you can let Rev. Ellie know if you would like something from the PCT or Laura in the church office or anyone on the Team.

The Pastoral Care team would love to have some new faces to add to our team! It's a rewarding group to join because you know you are really helping people who need it. The work load is pretty minimal as far as cooking goes other than in an emergency situation which, fortunately, don't occur very often. A bonus to fixing the dinner is then delivering it and maybe having a little visit. To join, please contact me, Kathi, or call [Rev. Ellie](#) or [Laura Brock](#) in the church office.

We're hoping that the Pastoral Care team can get back to business soon....but to keep it going, we do need you to let us know how we can help.

Kathi Haney

Newcomer News

The Newcomer Committee cherishes the opportunity to greet you in person, online or over the phone. Whether you are shopping, stopping by or hopping by our web site, we want you to know you are welcome and encourage you to learn more about our vibrant and diverse congregation.

We welcome two "Newcomer" staff members to our congregation. Joining our still newish Rector Ellie are Deacon Ken Schmidt and Ellen Oak, Pastoral Associate for Liturgy and Music. Please

see separate articles about them. We are excited to have them!

Newcomer FAQs

Where is Newcomer Information located? Just inside the doors at church, to your right, on the wooden desk. Look for updates soon

How do I contact the office?

Helpful Laura Brock, our Church Administrator is available at the church and by phone. (978) 263-5782 admin@goodshepherdacton.org.

What do my children do during the service?

Most parents prefer to have their children go to the Nursery or Sunday School (located downstairs), but certainly children can remain with parents at the service if you prefer.

What are the ministries and missions I might be able to join at the Church of the Good Shepherd?

You can find Mission Outreach Ministries under Community and Outreach on the right hand pull down menu here: <https://goodshepherdacton.org>. Contact information is found on the last page of this Shepherd's Staff.

What are the educational opportunities for children and adults?

See the CGS website page <https://goodshepherdacton.org> and our Church School page at: <https://sites.google.com/view/cgschurchschool/home>. Contact information can be found on the last page of this Shepherd's Staff.

Should you have any other questions, please contact church staff members or the Newcomer Committee co-chairs, Andy and Karen. We look forward to meeting you!

Andy Platt and Karen Wiss Pupo

With Abundant Gratitude to:

- **Harry Peebles** for all the work he did organizing and the day of the Regathering Picnic. We all had a great time.
- **Bev Ridpath and Neal Ogle** for faithfully leading Hop, Skip, and Jump Bible Study every month.
- **Ellen Oak** for saying Yes! to the Music position.



- **Harry Peebles** for taking care of a moisture problem at the Rectory
- **Our Choir members** for joyfully leading us in worship music through the most amazing

events – even in a pandemic!



- **Rev. Jorge Gutierrez** for leading worship while Ellie was on vacation. It is always such a treat when he leads worship.



- **Paul Zinn** for researching a possible Outreach program for the Vestry

- **Barb Magee** for the hours she puts in co-ordinating our many Outreach Programs
- **the Prayer Chain**, and **Prayer Shawl creators** for the prayers and Prayer Shawl for Peter Cronin's dad



- **Lydia Tolley** for organizing and setting up our booth at Oktoberfest as well as manning the table in the morning, and for **Harry Peebles, Rev. Ellie, and Taryn Ross-Hyman** for after-

noon table coverage.

- **Tom Hoch and Jon Panek** for safely laying all of the wires for the speakers, setting up all of the electronics for both sound and visuals, and for tuning all the systems to work together.



- **All those who took photos** for this issue; you helped make issue what it is.

Administration

August Vestry Vignettes

Ellie began the meeting with a reading from *Psalms for Praying: An Invitation for Wholeness*.

Ellie introduced Deacon Ken to the Vestry who will be starting in September. The Vestry approved a motion to call Ken to serve as Deacon at Good Shepherd.

Music Minister Search

Ellie has met with 4 candidates; all well qualified. The top candidate was referred by a colleague. The Music Discernment Committee met with the top candidate, who was very impressive. They didn't feel it was necessary to meet with other candidates unless Ellie thought they should. Ellie will write a few paragraphs on each candidate and send to the committee and have them decide if they want to meet others.

Vestry Procedures

We are hitting our stride, and making a lot of decisions. Ellie asked us not to feel rushed to make decisions. We would like to consider a Vestry retreat in the fall and felt it would be helpful to have the meeting minutes and agenda distributed several days before our meeting

Sound System

Two quotes for Phase 2 were shared which were over our budget of \$8,310. The tradeoff is on visuals, larger speakers vs smaller speakers w/amplifiers. How important are the aesthetics? Our current system wiring can temporarily delay the expense, but having the system up and running for our regathering is a priority.

Regathering Plans

Scheduled for Sept 12, at this time we plan for indoor services at 8am and 10am. (People are expressing concerns about the Delta variant, so this may change). We have also planned for a multi-generational picnic with games following the 10am service. The church will provide burgers and other basics, and invite the parish to bring potluck dishes. Taryn and Ellie have been planning Church School. Taryn will send out a survey to church school families about how they feel about starting Church School. Taryn has asked if we could get smaller air purifiers for the classrooms

Future service times/locations still TBD
We closed with Prayer and Dismissal.