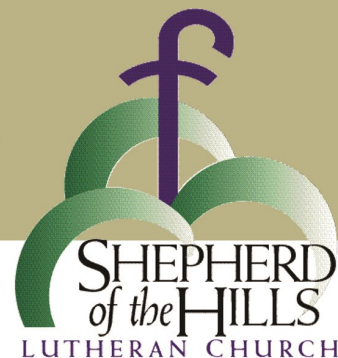


Shepherd's Voice



February 2024

“Learn Team Updates”

By Pastor Sherri Otto

I was sitting at my desk, staring at my computer wondering, “What should I write about this month?” There were so many different directions that swirling in my head, when it occurred to me, to write about our LEARN team and what we are planning for the coming months.

When we met last, we had a packed full agenda and are working hard to accomplish all that we have set out to do. And so, I would like to fill you in on a few things so you can be just as excited as we are about the future here at Shepherd!

First of all, **Ash Wednesday** will be taking place on **February 14 at 6:30 pm**. Lenten Dinner Church will be happening again this year starting on February 21 from 6:00pm to 7:00pm. We will be planning meals, worship service and projects for us to do and are **asking individuals and families to prayerfully consider a contribution to help fund the dinners**. Each week, **we are asking for \$400.00** and this could be split between families or given by one person or family. If you are interested in helping us achieve this goal, please contact me. We thank you in advance for your generosity!

Take a look below at the exciting events that we are planning!!

- **Women's Breakfast on February 17** - The presentation will be on the **topic of Sextortion** and how we can protect and inform our children of these dangers. Future Women's Breakfast topics include service projects and/or speaker on the “Ashes to Action” book.
- **Pastor Yolanda's birthday!!** – February 18!! (I just put this in so that you would all know!!)
- Chalice making and First Communion for anyone who hasn't received their First Communion. **Chalice making will be on February 24 - and Instruction will be on February 25. First Communion will take place on Maundy Thursday, March 28.**
- **Migration forum after worship on March 10** - presented by Pastor Melissa from Tapestry
- **Holden Village trip in 2025** – we will be holding a **meeting on April 21** for those that might be interested in participating and planning this amazing trip.
- **Vacation Bible School** will take place **June 10-13** and we are always looking for volunteers
- **Book launch for Pastor Yolanda's new book** which will be coming out early/mid summer!
- We are currently working on a training for all volunteers to protect against **Sexual Molestation and Misconduct**. We currently have boundaries training in place, but this would be an added protection for all involved.

Pastor's Message continued on page 2

**Shepherd of the Hills
Lutheran Church
500 Blake Road South
Edina, MN 55343
(952) 935-3457**

Staff:

Senior Pastor	Rev. Dr. Yolanda Denson-Byers
Associate Pastor	Rev. Sherri Otto
Calvary Pastor	Rev. Wade Wacholz
Music Director	Patti Arntz
Administrative Assistant	Shawn Wacholz
Building Manager	Blair Prax

Church Council Members / Officers:

President	Chris Polston
Vice President	Steve Hanneman
Treasurer	Jean Wicks
Financial Secretary	Fred Jensen
Secretary	Kim Kelly
Serve	Nancy Shaeffer
Worship & Music	Karen Hofstad
Building & Facilities	Peter Barott
Learn	Lyn Kopperud
Communications	Joe Palmersheim
Care	Brittany Roeser
LMCC	Open
Evaluation	Open

Telephone & Voice Mail Extensions:

Shawn Wacholz	11
Pastor Yolanda Denson-Byers	12
Pastor Sherri Otto	13
Blair Prax	17

Shepherd Online!

Pr. Yolanda Denson-Byers	pastoryolanda@sothchurch.com
Pr. Sherri Otto	sherri.otto@sothchurch.com
Pr. Wade Wacholz	pastorwade@sothchurch.com
Shawn Wacholz	office@sothchurch.com
Blair Prax	blair.prax@sothchurch.com
Church web site	www.sothchurch.com

Office Hours:

Office hours:

Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Fridays, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Pastor Yolanda's office hours:

Monday, 9:30-5:30 (home office);

Tuesday-Thursday, 9:30-5:30 (SOTH);

Friday in Sabbath.

Pastor Sherri's office hours:

Monday-Thursday 9:00 am -5:00 pm (SOTH);

Friday in Sabbath

Pastor's Message continued from page 1

- **Revisiting Sunday school** and the function of it. **On February 25**, we will be having a meeting after worship for parents of Sunday School age students to discuss what is working, what is not working and what parents would like to see happen. Bring your hopes, dreams, imagination and out of the box thinking!!

As you can see, this team cares deeply about Shepherd in all of its ministries and learning. I am very proud of the work that they have accomplished and look forward with excitement on what is on the horizon. Thank you to Alyssa Barott, Joanna Dallum, Joan Dillon, Lindsey Erickson, Lyn Kopperud, Emily Koski, Stephanie Nordin and Siri Prax for all of your work and dedication.

We are truly blessed here at Shepherd of the Hills!

Peace,
Pastor Sherri

GIVING: Thank you for your generosity to SOTH!

There are many ways to give:



TEXT "GIVE" to 844-503-1571

MAIL: 500 Blake Road South, Edina, MN 55343

Place your gift in the offering plate at church.

SCAN the QR Code



DREAMING TOGETHER

By Pastor Wade Wacholz, Calvary pastor

I was called to be the pastor of Calvary Lutheran – Edina in the summer of 2018. In the over 5 ½ years since then, so much has happened. The beautiful Calvary family, some 85 years from its founding as the first Protestant congregation in Edina, welcomed me in to share a hopeful vision of what we could do together in ministry in and from the southwest Edina neighborhood we called home. We got to know each other and began to study some things about our area. Then the COVID pandemic arrived and, as with Shepherd and all other churches, we had to turn all our efforts into remaking congregational life in a changed world.

For all these years we continued a connection between Shepherd and Calvary that had begun in 2017 through Pastor Scott. Like in all relationships, there was some ebb and flow. Yet, we never ceased to support each other in mission and ministry. Out of that long standing connection a new process started to enfold in late 2022. The two church councils formed a team of Calvary and Shepherd members (Becky Rorke, Steve Manacek, Cindy Morris, Adam Driscoll, Bruce Nelson, Alyson Purdy, Pastors Sherri, Susan, Wade, Yolanda) to begin to explore more deeply how Calvary and Shepherd might join together. Calvary then made a difficult but faithful decision to sell its property and wrap up its 85 year history as a stand alone congregation. Part of its final decision-making process included developing a legacy fund to distribute proceeds from the property sale. The Calvary Legacy Fund ended up with over \$2,300,000 in proceeds and the congregation voted this past September on a plan to distribute those funds among some 30+ worthy organizations, locally, nationally and internationally.

At our annual meeting in January we heard a presentation from the Calvary/Shepherd Team with some exciting news. From Calvary's Legacy Fund proceeds there will be at least \$300,000 in available funds to support new ministry initiatives housed at or from Shepherd of the Hills. This funding is intended to provide real resources for congregational ministry in our shared community of Edina/Hopkins. The plans will ultimately be approved by both the Calvary and Shepherd church councils, with the goal to consider ideas, research and evaluate them and approve them no later than October. After approval implementation can begin with no set deadline for completion and a hope that what we begin will become sustaining for years to come.

We want your ideas, your dreams and your hopes for what this new vision of shared ministry may look like in our community. During the last two worship services in February (the 18th and 25th) we will take some time to gather suggestions and ideas and then, following worship on Feb. 25, hold a listening session during the coffee hour after worship. Outside of worship there will be other ways to provide your input. We'll have a suggestion box on the Welcome Center, or you can always email the pastors or one of the Team members (reach out to a Pastor or Shawn for email addresses). Eventually we will do a survey of all members to help refine options and directions.

Dreaming Together continued

Here are some ministry areas that we hope can prompt your ideas, built around the four ministry areas that shape Shepherd's ministry today:

Serve: Ideas that would meet an identified need in our congregation/ neighborhood/community in the areas of housing, peacemaking, inclusion, justice, economic development and the like.

Care: Ideas for support and caregiving to members, neighbors, community in the realms of physical needs (food, clothing, health care), mental health, spiritual care, prayer support, visitation, companionship.

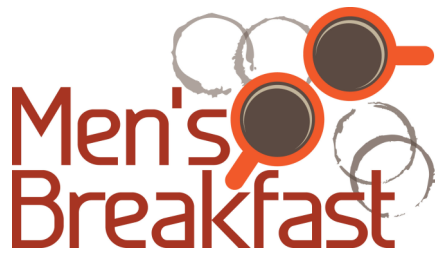
Learn: Ideas that would help educate people across the multi-generational spectrum, both in faith formation and practices but also in other areas that would support wholeness, healing, relationship building and fellowship.

Worship: Ideas that would support innovation and depth in worship life and practice for our membership but also for the sake of those who may seek a different mode, style or form of "church".

I'd anticipate a great many good ideas, and maybe a few "wild" ones. Our resources are solid but not unlimited. We hope the conversation can start wide and then narrow to ideas and proposals that show the best viability, impact and alignment with our core mission to *Love God and love neighbor in the Spirit of Jesus*. Or, to put it in Calvary's language, to *Welcome, worship and witness in Jesus' name*.

Please spend some time in thought and prayer about this wonderful opportunity. Then throughout this month we hope you will share your best ideas and dreams for what new thing God could be doing with and through us for the sake of God's love.

Pastor Wade



MEN'S BREAKFAST

Saturday, Feb. 10 at 8:30 am

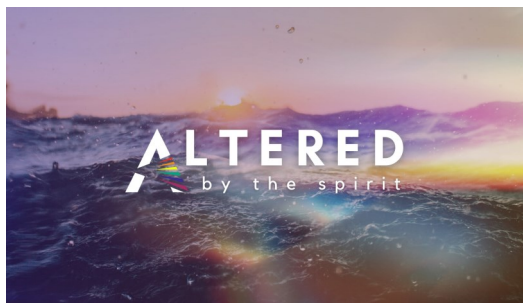
SOTH will host a men's breakfast at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 10. Sign up by emailing Pr. Wade at pastorwade@sothchurch.com. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Wade at 612-716-6707.



WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

Sat., February 17 at 9:00 am

Come join us for breakfast and conversation as Pastor Sherri shares with us the information she received on the topic of "Sextortion". Whether you have kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews or neighbors, you will want to hear about this topic and learn what steps to take if this happens to someone you love. Sign up at the Welcome Desk.



LENT BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14 Altered by the Spirit

Lent is often a time of self-reflection, spiritual discipline, commitment, and community. Congregations gather to sing the minor harmonies of the way of Jesus on the road toward the cross. This Lent with Church Anew, we'll see the ways the Spirit alters our perspective, transforms our communities, and consistently blazes a trail ahead of us.

Ash Wednesday Worship will be on Feb. 14 at 6:30 pm

Ash Wed., Feb. 14	Altered in Witness
Sun., Feb. 18	On the Edge of Belonging
Sun., Feb. 25	Through Stories ...
Sun., Mar. 3	Disruption
Sun., Mar. 10	God's Creativity
Sun., Mar. 17	Alongside our Enemies
Palm Sunday, Mar. 24	Victory

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT

Dinner church is back!!

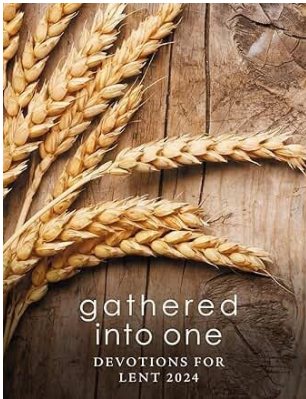
Starting Wed., February 21 at 6:00 pm

Starting on Wed., February 21, we will gather each Wednesday, at 6:00 pm, for a meal and time of worship, song, prayer and conversation! The final dinner church will be Wed, March 20 before Holy Week commences on Thursday, March 28.

Our theme is "God Is Still With Us" and we will dwell in the following stories:

- Jesus in the Wilderness
- A Blind Man is Healed
- Mary, Martha and Lazarus
- Calming the Storm
- Jesus Shares His Last Passover
- Jesus in the Garden

If you are willing to help sponsor the cost of one meal, as we did last year, please be in contact with Pastor Sherri. We look forward to this special time together, as we prepare our hearts for the Easter Celebration!!



LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BOOKS

“Gathered into One” provides daily devotions for each day from Ash Wednesday to the Resurrection of Our Lord/Vigil of Easter (traditionally known as Holy Saturday). Devotions begin with an evocative image and a brief passage from First Corinthians. The writers then bring their diverse voices and pastoral wisdom to the texts with quotations to ponder, reflections, and prayers.

Portions of First Corinthians appear in the Revised

Common Lectionary during each lectionary year. The apostle Paul writes this letter to the church in Corinth after hearing of quarreling and divisions among the people. He teaches the Corinthians that each person has a unique set of gifts from the Holy Spirit, given for the common good, and reminds them that the church is the body of Christ, joined together with one bread, one cup, one baptism, one God, and one Spirit. This theme of unity amid diversity is as timely now as it was when Paul wrote to the Corinthians.

During this journey through Lent to the Easter feast, may we celebrate the diversity among us as well our unity in Christ.

Our own Pastor Yolanda has written a portion of the devotions in the book. A limited number of books are available at the Welcome Desk. Suggested donation of \$3.00 ea.



WORD ON WEDNESDAYS!

10:00 am and 6:30 pm

10:00 am: Come for Bible study, coffee, and fellowship! The Wednesday morning group meets at 9:30 am for coffee, treats and fellowship before they begin a Bible study. The Bible study begins at 10:00 am and is based on the following Sunday’s sermon text. All are welcome.

6:30 pm: Meet at SOTH for weekly Bible Study, led by Pastor Wade. Each week, we will discuss readings from the coming Sunday’s Worship. No prep – just come and walk together in the Word!

IMPORTANT DATES!

February:

- Feb. 10 Men’s Breakfast
- Feb. 14 Lent begins on Ash Wed.
- Feb. 17 Women’s Breakfast
- Feb. 20 Lenten Dinner Church begins
- Feb. 24 Chalice Making
- Feb. 25 First Communion Instruction
- Feb. 25 Volunteer Appreciation
- Feb. 25 Sun School Parents’ Meeting

SUNDAY SCHOOL PARENT MEETING

February 25 after church

Parents of Sunday School age children are invited to discuss what they need and want from the church for their children. Is there a different way to do Sunday school? What is working, what is not working and what would parents like to see happen? Bring your hopes, dreams, imagination and out of the box thinking!!

Child care will be provided.

SOTH BOOK CLUB

Book club at SOTH is open to all. Please feel free to join us. Please contact Alyssa Barott for questions or more information (apbarott@gmail.com)

Book Club Schedules

Sun., March 3 at 11:00 am at SOTH.

Book: “The Covenant of Water” by Abraham Verghese

Children, Youth & Family

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

5:30-6:20 pm	Adult Choir
6:30-7:30 pm	WoW Adult Bible Study
6:30-7:30 pm	Confirmation (6th-8th Grade)
7:30-8:30 pm	Senior High

SUMMER PREVIEW

VBS

June 10-13, 9:00 to noon

Summer Festival Camp

High School - July 7-10

Middle School - July 14-17



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Sunday, February 25

Join us on Sunday, February 25 for a special treat at the coffee hour after worship in appreciation of our volunteers and donors. We have successfully filled bins of school supplies, winter wear, toys and socks, grocery bags and egg cartons that have been greatly appreciated by our local community. We

would like to thank all volunteers that work in our church and community for their service. Thank you to the altar guild, readers, ushers, communion servers, bankers, choir members, musicians, quilters, visitation team, funeral lunch coordinators / servers, Loaves and Fishes preparers/servers, Cottageville Park cleaners, Sunday School teachers, council members/teams and youth service projects. We probably forgot some volunteers in our list, but we thank all for their generosity of time and spirit



GREAT SOTH VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Did you know that the reason we enjoy being able to have communion each week is all because of volunteers? We have a small, dedicated volunteer group called the Altar Guild who do the preparation, set-up and clean-up for communion

and also do chancel care at Shepherd. Three to four times per year, each person (or a pair) does this easy and rewarding, "in-the-background" work.

Anyone can do it, including a parent with a daughter or son of at least confirmation age. We'd love to have you join us—it's a wonderful, quiet way to serve!! Please contact Shawn (office@sothchurch.com), Sally Nash (sallyanash@gmail.com) or Kathy Wiemer (klwiemer@aol.com) with any questions or to include your name as an Altar Guild volunteer. Thanks!!



SHEPHERD'S VOICE NEWSLETTER

Communication is key to staying connected to our family of faith. In our efforts to keep the congregation up-to-date on important news and events, we use our weekly Sunday bulletin, our weekly emails, sent now through Constant Contact, letters and post cards mailed to your homes and our monthly printed newsletter which is mailed to homes.

Most of us have access to electronic devices—like computers or smartphones—that will allow us to read updates and newsletters online and in a more timely and cost effective manner. Going forward, we will be sending the monthly Shepherd's Voice Newsletter out with our weekly emails. The newsletter will also be posted on our website (www.sothchurch.com).

We are happy to mail a hard copy of the monthly newsletter to your home but your church council requests that you notify the church office if you would like to "opt-in" to receive your Shepherd's Voice newsletter via US Postal Mail.

Call (952.935.3457) or email (office@sothchurch.com) the church office to "opt-in" to receive a hard copy mailed to your home.

If you are not receiving our weekly email update and would like to, please let us know you wish to be added to the list.

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
500 Blake Road South
Edina, MN 55343

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Hopkins, MN
Permit No. 132

Dated Material

