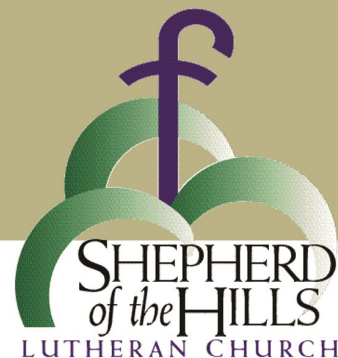


# Shepherd's Voice



May 2022

## **"I Thank My God for All of You"**

By Pastor Scott Searl

*"I thank my God every time I think of you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion on the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:3-6*

One of the most influential people in my life was my youth director, Brent Johnson. And there is one story that has defined my sense of self and God, and Brent is at the very heart of it. The story goes something like this... You might be surprised to learn that I've not always been as cool as I am now. (Insert your favorite sarcastic emoji here – I'd choose the basic eyeroll) But Brent was cool. Guitar playing, long hair wearing, outgoing, exciting youth director Brent was everything I thought was awesome when I was a senior in high school. And for some strange reason Brent liked me! Tall, skinny, dorky, short hair wearing, golf playing, saddle shoe wearing me. One day Brent called, as was his way of doing youth ministry and said, "I'm going to Target with some other kids, want to come with and we will go have dinner afterwards?" How could I resist? Off to Target I went and met Brent at the entrance. Thinking I would try and be cool, I grabbed one of those beautiful red Target shopping carts and thought... I'm gonna' surf this thing! I put my left saddle shoe wearing foot on the lower part of the cart and with my right gave a mighty push! Now, if this was a movie this would be the part where we would hit the "slowmo" action. Imagine a six foot four kid putting all his skinny weight on the bottom rack of an empty red Target shopping cart... now imagine that beautiful red Target shopping cart taking off like a rocket launched directly into the end cap display of toilet paper because, well... empty red Target shopping carts are not balanced for such a surfing activity and I hit the floor as the red rocket Target shopping cart took out the toilet paper like a bowling ball! "Clean up on aisle 2!"

I was horrified. Laying on the floor I thought Brent would just walk away. Instead, he came right up to me, looked me in the eye, held out his hand to pick me up and said, "I love you man." I was speechless. I am still sort of speechless to this day. Cool, long hair wearing, guitar playing, Brent loved tall, dorky, saddle shoe wearing, toilet paper aisle destroying me... I was stunned. It was the first time I remember physically feeling God's love.

Then, when I finally graduated from high school later that year and headed out on a new adventure, Brent wrote the above quote from Philippians in the Bible he gave me. "I thank my God for you," Brent wrote. "I pray for you," Brent wrote. "I love you," Brent wrote. And "I know God has good things in store for you," Brent wrote.

**Pastor's Message continued on page 2**

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

**Staff:**

Pastors	Scott Searl, Sherri Otto
Music Director	Emily Koski
Intern Pastor	Anne Schaefer
Faith Community Nurse	Kaye Wothe
Administrative Assistant	Shawn Wacholz
Building Manager	Blair Prax

**Church Council Members / Officers:**

President	Adam Driscoll
Vice President	Don Wothe
Treasurer	Open
Financial Secretary	Fred Jensen
Secretary	Christa Meland
Serve	Nate Lichy
Worship & Music	Karen Hofstad-Parkhill
Building & Facilities	Peter Barott
Learn	Stephanie Nordin
Communications	Joe Palmersheim
Care	Johanna Olson
LMCC	Open
Evaluation	Open

**Telephone & Voice Mail Extensions:**

Shawn Wacholz	11
Pastor Scott Searl	12
Pastor Sherri Otto	13
Intern Pastor Anne Schaefer	14
Blair Prax	15
Emergency Message Mailbox	24
Kaye Wothe	25

**Shepherd Online!**

Pr. Scott Searl	scott@sothchurch.com
Pr. Sherri Otto	sherri.otto@sothchurch.com
Intern Pr. Anne Schaefer	anne.schaefer@sothchurch.com
Shawn Wacholz	office@sothchurch.com
Kaye Wothe	kaye.wothe@sothchurch.com
Blair Prax	blair.prax@sothchurch.com
Church web site	www.sothchurch.com

**Pastor's Message continued from page 1**

And so today, as I prepare for my next adventure, I offer these same words to each of you. *"I thank my God for each of you, constantly praying with joy for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion in the day of Jesus Christ."* I am grateful for all the baptisms, celebrations of life, times when we picked one another up, Easter celebrations, Christmas Eve services, block parties and confirmations. While I'm not as skinny as I was when I was in high school, I still have those same saddle shoes, and I'm grateful for all the miles we've walked together. I thank my God for you. I will pray for you. I love you. And I know God has good things in store for you...

With gratitude, love and a mountain of thanks,  
Pastor Scott



## **PRESIDENT'S POST: Volunteer Update**

*By Adam Driscoll, Council President*

On April 24, our congregation met for our annual meeting, in which we got an opportunity to thank and recognize outgoing members of our church council, as well as vote on members of a number of important volunteer positions for our family of faith. Thank you to the following individuals who were elected to serve our congregation.

### **Church Council**

Financial Secretary - Fred Jensen  
Communications Lead - Joe Palmersheim  
Care Team Lead - Johanna Olson  
Worship Team Lead - Karen Hofstad-Parkhill

### **Personnel Committee**

Augusta Lane  
Julie Showers  
Scott Koelsch

### **Pastoral Call Committee**

Alyssa Barrot  
Brittany Roeser  
Johanna Olson  
Kathy Wiemer  
Kevin Wicks  
Louis Nelson  
Roz Toohey

We remain in need of a treasurer, as our current treasurer, Steve Hanneman, has reached his term limit after a pair of 2-year terms. A competent and committed treasurer is vital to the operation of a church family such as ours. If you have the ability to successfully serve in this capacity, we ask that you consider visiting with me at [driscolla@gmail.com](mailto:driscolla@gmail.com), to see if you may be a good fit.



## **CELEBRATION FOR PASTOR SCOTT**

**Friday, May 20 at 6:30 pm**

A gathering to CELEBRATE the ministry of Pastor Scott Searl at SOTH will be Friday, May 20th at 6:30pm. There will be dessert and a program. Please join us! (If you would like to contribute toward a gift for Pastor Scott, donations are being accepted in the church office.) Pastor Scott's last Sunday at Shepherd will be on May 22.



## **CELEBRATION FOR LORRAINE CUSHMAN Happy 100th Birthday!**

**Sunday, May 22 following worship**

Everyone is invited for a reception in honor of Lorraine Cushman's 100th birthday on Sunday, May 22 following worship!



## MENTAL HEALTH CONNECT EDUCATION

### Self-Care for the Caregiver

Monthly sessions: offered the last Thursday of each month

A virtual monthly drop in group, Care/Support for the Caregiver. Each of these groups would provide community, support and an education topic. There will be a MHC Navigator, a therapist and our educator (Drew Brooks) at the meeting each month. Many of you are searching for help for a loved one, but you also need support too. MHC has resources, tools and a virtual time to share. This is another source of support for a growing population of caregivers.

To register, go to <https://www.mhconnect.org/events>

**MENTAL HEALTH CONNECT**  
Mental Health Resources and Education can be found on their webpage:

<http://www.mhconnect.org/events>



## SAVE THE DATE

### Stories of Hope: Apart but Never Alone

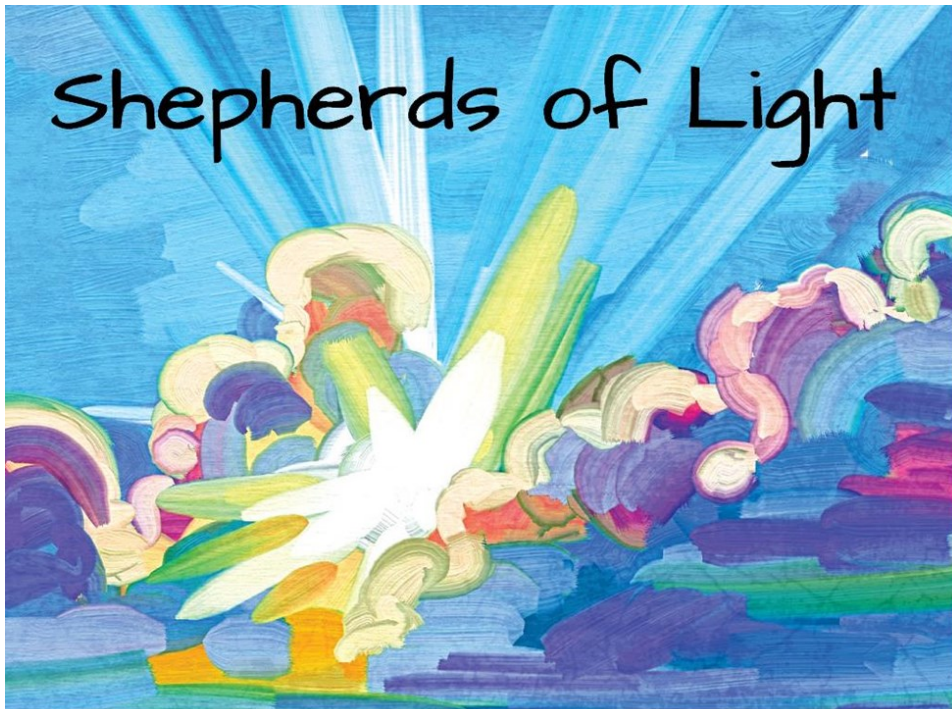
Fundraiser for Mental Health Connect

May 12, 2022 at 8:30 am

Everyone knows someone who's been living with mental illness. You, your child, a friend, or co-worker?

By supporting Mental Health Connect, you're helping to give people hope, reduce stigma, provide resources to increase quality of life and improve access to services for all people.

Attend Mental Health Connects Annual Breakfast "Apart But Never Alone" Join virtually on May 12th at 8:30am to hear how this happens. To register, go to: <https://www.mhconnect.org/stories-of-hope>



## SENIOR GRADUATION RECOGNITION

This year we recognize the following Seniors from SOTH:

Mason Hobbs, Madalyn Lilly, Elliot Teppen

Congratulations as you graduate from High School! May God's blessings follow you wherever you go and whatever you do!!

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

**Food Truck Party, On A Roll with God!**

**June 13th to June 16th, 9:00am to Noon**

Registration is now open and sign-up sheets are available at the SOTH Welcome Desk. Cost is \$20.00 per family. Any questions, contact Pastor Sherri or Pastor Anne.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – VBS

We are looking for volunteers to help with Vacation Bible School, June 13th to June 16th, 9:00am to noon. If you have a passion for singing, dancing, art, games, food and fun, please contact Pastor Sherri or Pastor Anne. Many hands and hearts will be needed to make this the best Food Truck Party ever!!

## SUMMER FESTIVAL CAMP

We are SO EXCITED for Summer Festival Camp! Registration is up - Pastor Anne will email a link in the Tuesday email. Current 8-12th grade camp is July 10-13 and current 5-6th grade camp is July 17- 20. Cost is \$270 per person, but we want EVERYONE to experience camp! Please let us know if we can help with a scholarship. Payment is due one week prior to camp! Friends are welcome!

## NURSERY STAFF NEEDED!

We are looking for high school and older staff for our nursery on Sunday mornings. Please let Kaye Wothe, Faith Community Nurse, know if you are interested! [kwothe@comcast.net](mailto:kwothe@comcast.net) or 952-250-2566.

## GAMES

We are looking for gently used lawn games like Cornhole boards, ladder golf, Jenga, Connect 4, etc. Also looking for someone to help lead some fun simple art projects. Both would be super helpful for SOTH FOOD AND FUN events this summer. Please contact Kaye Wothe, Faith Community Nurse, if you have games or can help! Email: [kwothe@comcast.net](mailto:kwothe@comcast.net) or 952-250-2566 or call church 952-935-3475.

# Education

---

## SOTH BOOK CLUB

Book club at SOTH is open to all. Please feel free to join us. We have 2-3 copies of each book. All books will be available all year if you want to read ahead. Please read the book and return ASAP so another person can borrow the book for reading also. We try to get 2-3 readers to be able to read one copy.

Meetings will be on Zoom. For questions please contact Kaye Wothe, Faith Community Nurse at [kwothe@comcast.net](mailto:kwothe@comcast.net)

## Book Club Schedules

Sun., June 12 at 7:00 pm  
“The House in the Cerulean Sea”  
by TJ Klune

Sun., July 17 at 7:00 pm  
TBD by readers

## WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY

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.



**DRIVING IMPROVEMENT CLASS AT SHEPHERD**  
**Thursday, May 19**  
**from 1:00-5:00 pm**  
**55+ Driver Improvement Program**

The Driver Improvement Program offered by the Minnesota Highway Safety and Resource Center is open to the public and is taught by a certified instructor. By utilizing the most up to date research in the field, participants will be provided the latest information in regards to driver safety, new laws, and vehicle technology.

The fee for the four hour refresher course is \$24.00. Persons age 55 and older who complete the course qualify for a ten percent discount on their auto insurance premiums. For more information or to register for a class near you, visit [www.driverdiscountprogram.com](http://www.driverdiscountprogram.com) or call toll free, 1-888-234-1294.



## PARKING LOT SPRING UPDATE

**Asphalt** The final 2-inch wear course will be placed in June after some warm weather has had a chance to heat up the existing bituminous and dry out the subgrade. During the final overlay, any ponding issues will be resolved along with any damaged areas of the base course.

**Landscaping** Final grading of the landscaped areas and installation of the new landscaping will be completed mid to late May. The irrigation system will also be updated to service the newly landscaped areas.

**Lighting** The parking lot lighting upgrades are complete. All exterior fixtures have been upgraded to LED which are more energy efficient and require little to no maintenance for many years.

**Rain Garden** The final rain garden installation and landscaping will be completed in mid to late May.

**SE Parking Lot Swale** The swale along the west side of the SE lot will be completed mid to late May to ensure the water draining off the south lot flows to the SW corner and eventually offsite.

## COTTAGEVILLE PARK CLEAN-UP

Saturday, May 7

Saturday, May 7th from 10-11AM. We are looking for SOTH volunteers to help pick up trash at Cottageville Park on Blake Road. If you are interested in participating in this community service activity, please call/text Nate Lichy @ 952-693-1200. Any and all help would be appreciated!



## **AT EVERY TURN: Insights from the Intern**

*By Intern Pastor Anne Schaefer*

*Welcome to my little corner of the world. As an intern pastor, I am learning a great deal about what it means to be called to ministry. Each month, I will use this newsletter space to reflect on the wisdom that has come my way. I will likely learn a great deal about God, the Church, this congregation, faith, myself and grace. Thanks for being part of my journey!*

Lesson #1: Persistence really does pay off. FOUR WHOLE YEARS ago I entered a process called Candidacy which is the process to Ordination. This process parallels my seminary education. It helps to affirm God's call on my life and make sure I am mentally and emotionally healthy enough for ministry. Candidates like myself have three separate interviews with the candidacy committee that can be emotional, raw, brutal and all together stressful. These committee members are supposed to challenge your experiences, encourage your future in ministry and point out your flaws or "growing edges" as they like to call them.

I have recently checked the second to last box on the four-year timeline. The last box to check will be at Ordination. While each step was exciting along the way, this feeling of completeness is a bit overwhelming. My next step, the very last step, will come when I receive a call to a congregation (don't worry, this step doesn't come until my internship is complete, or even months after that... it might be a long while). At ordination, the bishop will come, and together with all the ordained pastors in my life will lay their hands upon my head and shoulders and ask for the Spirit to always lead me in God's ministry of Word and Sacrament. I am sure that I will bawl like a baby in this moment. But for now, I sit in this quiet, completeness knowing that God has been present with me and has helped me to persevere in running this race. Though this process feels nearly complete, I know that I will forever be growing and changing into the leader God is calling me to be. So I trust and am confident that "God who began a good work in me will carry it on to completion" (Phil 1:6). Thank you to those who have prayed for me and supported me along this journey. I am incredibly thankful.

Lesson #2 for this Intern... I have already marked off "Holy Week" next year on my calendar. I really recently learned that while this is the most wonderful week in the Church calendar, it is also incredibly draining! For 2023 in the week after Holy Week the only words on my personal calendar will be "Recover, Reset and Restore."

Grace and peace!  
Intern Pastor Anne





## A FRESH CANVAS

By Pastor Sherri Otto

I love to paint. I go to the store, pick out a ton of samples and bring them back to see which one will be the perfect color for the room. I find joy in this creative process and when it is finished, I feel a sense of pride in my work.

Now painting things on a canvas... that's a different story. I consider myself a bit creative, but I'm also a rule follower, so I have a hard time just letting go and letting the paint brush take over.

One example of this is when our family went out to Colorado to visit relatives. We went to one of those places where you are with a group of people that all paint the same picture. The instructor walks you through each step, telling you which brush to use, etc. I, of course, was watching with a careful eye and listening intently to the instructions to get my painting "just right." Emily, on the other hand, was around 10 years old and was getting frustrated as she was having a hard time keeping up with the adults. At one point, I thought she was going to quit, but she stayed with it.

We painted a tree full of different colored leaves and I thought we all did a fairly decent job. At the end, our instructor said, "Now look at your tree and if you want to add anything to it to make it your own, do so now."

I thought, "I'll just put my initials in the bottom of the tree" as that seemed a safe thing to do without ruining what I had just created. I looked over at Emily and as I did, she took her brush and painted a black vertical line off of the branch of her tree. I thought, "What the heck are you doing Emily? You just ruined your beautiful painting!" She then drew a circle at the bottom of the line and said, "Look mom! My tree has a tire swing!"

Words that I will never forget. A painting created by a beautiful, innocent soul. A teaching moment for me and for all who are reading this.

I learned that day that we don't need to have everything perfect in order for things to turn out beautifully. We don't need to follow all of the instructions to achieve perfection. We don't need to adhere to all of the old ways of doing things if that means it limits our way of thinking and keeps us from having an open mind and heart.

I also learned that by changing just one little aspect of a picture, it can change the whole meaning. That we can learn our best lessons from our youngest people and that it is truly never too late to change your perspective on things.

*Continued above*

## *A Fresh Canvas continued*

We are in a time of transition here at Shepherd... a time that can feel a bit scary, a bit off-balance, a bit overwhelming. But if we look at this time of transition with new eyes, it is like a fresh canvas, waiting to be painted, full of possibilities, potential and opportunities. Many hands and fingers will be needed to paint our canvas. Many colors will be used. Many hours will be spent. And it will be beautiful!

So today, I ask God to help us let go of the things that bind us up, that keep us from being a free, creative individual that God has made us to be. I ask God to help us let go of the worries that we will mess things up, to let go of the tightness in our voices, let go of the anxiety in our spirits. I ask God to help us paint our canvas with bright and beautiful colors, guiding us to shape or form where God leads us, even adding to our canvas, a tire swing!

God bless you all!

Peace,

Pastor Sherri



## EASTER HAS PASSED, ARE YOU CHANGED?

By Kaye Wothe, Faith Community Nurse

It's May and hopefully we are finally reveling in the hope of actual spring!

This year, I am struck by reflecting on how for 40 days we consider Lent. We confess, we look deeply within, we consider our part in Jesus' journey to the cross and we long for the light, hope and grace that comes with Easter. But, as wonderful as Easter is, afterward we are still our sinful imperfect selves. We may be a bit more aware of forgiveness and grace that the cross brought us but we are still imperfect.

I have always struggled with my own imperfection. I have even realized over the years how the perfectionist tendencies of others around me can add an equally big layer of struggle. What do we do with our impossible pursuit of perfection, knowing that while we strive to do better each day, we (and others we love) will forever be imperfect while on this earth?

I have decided to look for the beauty in the imperfect. Like the famous Japanese art (Kintsugi bowls) where the vase is broken and reassembled with a gold adhesive. The vase with its new gold veins has more beauty than the vase before it was broken. The vase is also stronger, more resilient than it was before, too. Imperfection in humans demands growth. With each imperfect act or flaw we learn something; we feed our growing edge and add to our wisdom.

The forgiveness and grace that is a result of the events of Easter recognizes our imperfection.

When I look at my kids, I see each of their individual imperfections. If I take time to think about it, I don't love them less for them but instead love them even more for their humanness and uniqueness. And if I really think about it, I am often looking at my own imperfection showing through them as they share my DNA and were nurtured by me. Admittedly, it is harder to see my own imperfections with the same love, but I am working on it! My faith and relationship with God, occasional time with my therapist and having loving people around me help the most.

What is the message in your head about your own imperfections? What about the imperfections of those around you? Can you see them for their beauty? Do you see the growth that can or does come from them? Does it add to your sense of resilience? If not, how can you rewire the negative message in your head? Is there a trigger or a mantra that can help you?

Reminding yourself you are a Child of God, loved and forgiven is a start. This is the real Easter.



## IMMIGRANT MINISTRY

### UPDATE

By Paul Bohnsack

You've heard the phrase "it takes a village to raise a child". The Asylum Coalition for Transition (ACT-TC) knows it takes a community to support a family. We need your help with the following as we continue to assist the Magomedov family:

- 1) **SUSTAINING SUPPORTERS** to contribute whatever you can on a monthly basis to assure that sufficient funds continue to be available to cover expenses for the Magomedovs (medical, educational fees and everyday living expenses).
- 2) **a DEPENDABLE CAR.** The Magomedovs will soon be allowed to seek employment and will need donated affordable transportation.
- 3) **a PROPERTY** that could be rented at below market rent. This could even include someone who is willing to share their home.

If you can help or know someone else who might be able to help, please contact Paul Bohnsack. (952-891-5677; bohnsackps@frontiernet.net)

ACT-TC would like to become a leader in the Twin Cities in providing resources to groups and individuals who may want to assist asylum-seekers. With the influx of Ukrainians, Afghans, and others seeking asylum please consider these needs for the benefit of those families also.

**AMMPARO** (an ELCA asylum program in which SOTH participates) periodically updates us on the progress and needs of the asylum network nationwide and appries us of rapidly developing news, such as the announcement by Texas Gov. Abbott to bus migrants to Washington, D.C. If you would like to be on the email list for these updates, please contact Paul Bohnsack (952-891-5677; bohnsackps@frontiernet.net).

### COMMUNITY

We all love being in community and all it offers! To keep the community of faith going we need volunteers! Please let us know if you can volunteer! We need council members (Treasurer!), help with Sunday morning hospitality (as we work to offer healthy and fun food and drink after worship), ushers, VBS help, and more. Let us know if you can help! It takes a team of volunteers to create and keep a great community going! Lots of hands make light work.

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



On Friday, May 20 from 6:30-8:00 pm we will CELEBRATE the many years of ministry Pastor Scott Searl provided at SOTH. There will be dessert and a short program that promises to be fun and heartfelt all at once. Please join us! (If you would like to contribute toward a gift for Pastor Scott, donations are being received in the church office.)