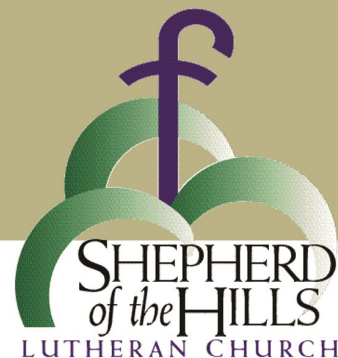


# Shepherd's Voice



November 2022

## **“LET’S CARE!”**

*By Pastor Sherri Otto*

In our home, there was a ritual on Sunday morning. We would have breakfast, get ready for church and sometimes, if my mom was busy, she would ask one of us to get the church envelope out for that particular Sunday. We would go to our buffet and pull out the small box of envelopes from the 2nd drawer down, on the left side. I actually loved doing this, pulling out the right envelope with the right date on it. I remember asking my mom what the number on the envelope was for and she explained to me that it was a special number given to our family so that they would know who the money came from. I never gave much thought about where this money went or what it was used for. I never thought about the maintenance of the building, the related programs or the salary of the pastor. As a child, I assumed that the pastor received all of it and then they would give it to whoever needed it at the time.

Once we were at church, we were each given some change right before the offering plate was passed around, so we could money into it. There were times that my parents did not have any change, so a one-dollar bill would be given to the kid sitting closest to them.

As I left home and went to college, I did not always go to church every Sunday. But when I did, I would try to remember to have money with me to put in the offering plate. Sometimes I had money but most times, I did not. I felt embarrassed when I would forget, having the plate pass in front of me and having nothing to put in it.

After college, I floated from church to church, in search of where I felt I could fit in. I remember the first time I “joined” a church, and they handed me a Pledge Card. I looked at it and thought, what is this? What does a Pledge card do and what does the word Pledge even mean? I was having a hard enough time paying my bills let alone “pledging” money on a regular basis! It was a turn-off. I didn’t want to make a pledge, do a pledge or have to pledge anything! That not only scared me but made me feel guilty that I wouldn’t always be able to do it.

This memory got me thinking, what does the word Pledge really mean and how is it portrayed by others? We’ve heard it used many different ways. “I pledge my allegiance”, “I pledge my love” and don’t forget Pledge, the furniture polish for wood! Wait... what??

As you can imagine, I now have a different understanding of what this all means than I did in my younger days. But that doesn’t mean that my feelings about this word Pledge are not valid for I believe a lot of us still feel this way today. And so, I want to make things easy, guilt-free and accessible.

***Pastor’s Message continued on page 3***

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

**Staff:**

Pastor	Sherri Otto
Interim Pastor	Susan Debner
Music Director	Open
Administrative Assistant	Shawn Wacholz
Building Manager	Blair Prax

**Church Council Members / Officers:**

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

**Telephone & Voice Mail Extensions:**

Shawn Wacholz	11
Pastor Susan Debner	12
Pastor Sherri Otto	13
Blair Prax	35

**Shepherd Online!**

Pr. Sherri Otto	sherri.otto@sothchurch.com
Pr. Susan Debner	pastorsusan.debner@sothchurch.com
Shawn Wacholz	office@sothchurch.com
Blair Prax	blair.prax@sothchurch.com
Church web site	www.sothchurch.com

**Pastor's Message continued**

Pledging is simply this... To care. To care for people, places and things around you... those who are close to you, those in your community and those who are strangers. To do as much as you can with what God has given you.

It's up to each person and/or families as to what you can care for at SOTH and in the surrounding community. There is no magic number, there is no comparison to what others are giving, there is no guilt associated with this kind of care.

My husband and I give a designated amount each month. This is something that we prayed about, discussed and agreed upon, something that makes sense to us in our lives, and it feels good to do this as a couple.

There are several easy ways that you can care about SOTH. Troy and I have set it up through our bank that a designated amount will come out of our checking account each month. This way, if we miss a Sunday, our care continues, even when we are away. You can also go on SOTH's website and care by selecting the donate button. Or if you like to put your care into the offering plate, you may do that as well.

Talking it over is the first step. Praying about how you will care for SOTH is your second step. Acting about this care is your third step. And I promise you, it will feel good in the end.

When you receive your card to turn in, think about how God has blessed your life, how SOTH has enriched you and your family and how you can give back as you care for all people. Remember the stories you have heard that have blessed you and think about the stories that will be told years from now on how this community has blessed others.

Please join me in the care of Shepherd!

Peace,  
Pastor Sherri



## PRESIDENT'S POST A Moment for Gratitude

By Adam Driscoll, Council President

Today, I wish to use this space to offer sincere gratitude to just a few of the people whose contributions make it such that we can enjoy this community.

- Thank you to all who volunteer at Shepherd, to our quilters, our educators, our caregivers, our ushers, our musicians, and so many more. The way you choose to give of your talents spreads warmth within our walls, and shares our mission outside of them.
- Thank you to our church council members, our personnel committee, our call committee, and all of those who labor quietly, and often thanklessly, performing the important administrative work which is needed in order to accommodate our mission.
- Thank you to our staff, who have taken on different and greater responsibilities, who have shifted their methods, and do so with grace and patience.
- Finally, thank you, reader, for making this community what it is, thank you for your prayers, your contributions, your energy, and warmth.

You see, in order to thank all of those who make Shepherd what it is, I must thank every single one of you. So thank you for engaging with us, thank you for volunteering, thank you for donations, thank you for showing up. Your contributions matter, and together, we make this community worth it.

## LUTHERAN PARTNERS IN GLOBAL MINISTRY

### Guest preacher on November 13

On Sunday, November 13, Pastor Dan Ruth will be our guest preacher. He is the executive director at Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry (LPGM). LPGM provides access to quality education for people at the margins—especially women and girls. They work with global partners to listen, respond, and bear witness to local needs and priorities. Dan will speak about LPGM's work with Q'eqchi' Maya girls in Guatemala, which SOTH's own Kristin and Osa Hanneman visited in June, as well as shared partnerships in India and Tanzania.

After worship, there will be an Adult Forum time which will include Kristen and Osa Hanneman who will speak on their mission trip experience in Guatemala.



## THANKSGIVING EVE WORSHIP

### Joint Service at Calvary

Wednesday, November 23  
6:30 pm

We have been invited to join our friends at Calvary Lutheran and St. Albans Episcopal for a joint, ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Worship. Calvary will host, with all the pastors co-leading a service of prayer, song, readings and giving thanks. And, pie will be served afterwards! Worship is at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2022, 6817 Antrim Road, Edina, MN. Come join in as we celebrate gratitude and share fellowship together!

## DECORATE THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS

Saturday, November 26 at 9:00 am

Save the date! We will decorate the church for Advent/Christmas on Saturday, November 26 at 9:00 am. Many hands make light work so come for as long or as little as you have time available. You can count on a really fun morning with a great group of people as we transform our church for the holiday season! Don't miss it! We are also looking for a few more volunteers to help set up the Christmas trees on Friday morning, November 25. Please contact Blair Prax at the church if you are available to help.





## CHANGE TO CHILL

### Who they are:

Change to Chill is a free, award-winning, mental well-being resource offered by Allina Health. Their interactive website is tailored to both teens and the adults who work with them. Change to Chill helps teens become more aware of the things that stress them out and equips them with relevant tools and resources to better manage stress and anxiety, so they can live happier, more resilient lives.

### What they do:

They provide free online and printable tools and resources that help teens become more aware of what stress is, what causes it and how to manage it. We also provide resources for parents, educators and adults to positively impact the mental health of someone they care about.

### Did you know?

About 1 in 5 students indicate experiencing symptoms of depression.

Students who reported mental health concerns lasting six months or more increased from 18% to 23% in 2019.

The percentage of 11th graders who said they seriously considered suicide in the past year increased from 20% in 2013 to 24% in 2019.

19% of students surveyed reported being bullied or harassed weekly in at least one way during the last 30 days. And you can only imagine these numbers are higher in the past few years due to COVID.

Please check out Change to Chill's website at [changetochill.org](http://changetochill.org). It is a wonderful resource!!



## TURKEY BINGO 2022

Nov. 6, 2022!!

You're Invited to Turkey Bingo and Bowling on Nov. 6th!

Help us raise funds for the ICA Food Shelf! Sign up for Turkey Bingo at the Welcome Desk and pay at the door. Adults are \$20 and children are \$10 (5 and under are free).

Bring your family and friends.

The fun begins at 10:45am, after the worship service on Sun., Nov. 6. Have a croissant sandwich lunch and get ready for some excitement. Six games of Bingo will be played and young participants can even bowl one frame with a frozen turkey!

WIN a turkey for your Thanksgiving Day feast. OR win tickets to Stages Theater, the St. Paul Saints, MN Children's Museum or lift tickets to Highland Hills. OR win a gift certificate to Punch Pizza, Benihana or Chipotle with more to come!

## 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.

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

### Book Club Schedules

Wed., December 7 at 7:00 pm at SOTH

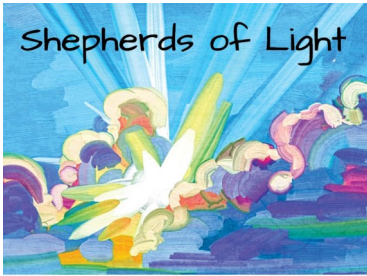
Book: "The Measure " by Nikki Erlick

## 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.

## SHARE TEAM UPDATE

SOTH annually distributes a percentage of our operating budget to reputable local, national and international charities. This year about \$10,000 was equally distributed amongst these charities. Donations were made to local charities: ICA Food Shelf, Reach and Restore and Resource West. National and international charities: ELCA Lutheran Disaster Fund (Hurricane Relief) and ELCA World Hunger also received donations. This is a reminder that SOTH, through your pledges/donations, continues to contribute to those in need.



## SHEPHERDS OF LIGHT

Grades Pre-K to 1st graders meet on Sunday mornings after worship in the Sanctuary

Grades 2nd to 5th meet on Wednesday evenings from 6:30pm to 7:30pm in Ranum Hall

### Singing during worship!!

- November 20th, 9:30am service

### Christmas Program practice

- December 10th, 9:30am to 11:00am

### Christmas Program/Worship

- December 11th, 9:30am service

## SUMMER CAMP INFORMATION!

### Mark your calendars!!

### SUMMER CAMP at LUTHER CREST

#### K-2nd Grade Explorers - July 23rd-24th, Sunday to Monday

Spend the night exploring what camp is all about! Kindergarteners through 2nd graders are invited to bring a parent or guardian with them to camp to experience all camp has to offer! Worship in God's creation, swim in Lake Carlos, sleep in our new cabins, create in our Arts and Crafts area, and make new friends!

Cost: by Feb 14 - \$199

On or after Feb 15 - \$269

#### 2nd – 4th Grade Seekers - July 25th-28th, Tuesday - Friday

The perfect half week at camp is calling your 2-4 grader! Come to camp for the perfect amount of time to hear about God's love for all! There will be swimming, crafts, games, worship, and more! Come make new friends and hangout with cool counselors!

Cost: by Feb 14 - \$449

On or after Feb 15 - \$529

#### 3rd to 6th Grade Leapers – July 23rd – 28th, Sunday - Friday

Leap into summer camp with our most popular program! Leapers will enjoy all that Luther Crest has to offer by worshipping, participating in Bible Study, swimming in Lake Carlos, doing arts & crafts, exploring God's creation, meeting new friends, playing All Camp Games, team building on the Low Lands Challenge Course, and more! There are lots of exciting activities awaiting campers who sign up for this classic camp experience, so sign up today!

Cost: by Feb 14 - \$734

On or after Feb 15 - \$834

Reservations are opening November 1st. Please contact Pastor Sherri if interested!

## MOONLIGHT MADNESS

6th through 9th graders

November 11th, 2022

9:00pm to 7:00am

This is an all-nighter event, starting at Augsburg College with dancing and games, then heading to Grand Slam, a Movie Theatre and ending with Bowling. Friends are invited too! Cost is \$43.00 per student. Please bring your money to the church by November 6th to reserve your spot!!

## NEW YOUTH ROOM

We are looking for students in 9th through 12th grade who would like to create a Youth Room in the former WAM room. Looking for ideas to paint, decorate, furnish, etc. and want to hear from you. Your voice matters as we want this to be a welcoming place for all youth to gather.

Come on Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm to meet, discuss and plan!!

## SUMMER FESTIVAL CAMP

High School:

Grades 9th through 12th

July 9th through 12th, Sunday through Wednesday

Middle School:

Grades 6th through 8th

July 16th through 19th, Sunday through Wednesday

Cost: TBD – estimated around \$250.00 to \$300.00

Friends are welcomed!!

# Staff Reflection



## UPDATE

By Paul Bohnsack

### Food For Thought

They have no need of our help  
So do not tell me  
These haggard faces could belong to  
you or me  
Should life have dealt a different hand  
We need to see them for who they  
really are  
Chancers and scroungers  
Layabouts and loungers  
With bombs up their sleeves  
Cut-throats and thieves  
They are not  
Welcome here  
We should make them  
Go back to where they came from  
They cannot  
Share our food  
Share our homes  
Share our countries  
Instead let us  
Build a wall to keep them out  
It is not okay to say  
These are people just like us  
A place should only belong to those  
who are born there  
Do not be so stupid to think that  
The world can be looked at another way  
(now read from bottom to top)

This excerpt of “Refugees” by Brian Bilston

Paul Bohnsack  
952-891-5677  
bohnsackps@frontiernet.net



## A SEASON OF GRATITUDE

By Interim Pastor Susan Debner

I love the way November invites the whole country into a season of gratitude. At SOTH last week, we sent gratitude letters to everyone who has given any “trackable” offerings in 2022—through checks, offering envelopes, estate gifts, or automated funds transfers. Some people also give by putting cash in the offering plate, showing up as volunteers, inviting folks to worship or other events at church, and offering their professional skills or connections for needs in and around Shepherd. These gifts are also amazing, but they are harder to track. They don’t always get the warm thanks they deserve. If you or someone you know has shared these kinds of gifts at Shepherd, would you please help us thank them? Gratitude is a year-round season at SOTH!

November will also give us an opportunity to thank two wonderful musicians for the amazing ways they have enriched our faith and worship at SOTH. Music Director, Emily Koski, wrapped up her time with us on October 30 and the celebration to thank her will be on November 20. Carolyn Diamond has been Shepherd’s organist for the past year, and she will also be wrapping up her time at Shepherd on November 6. We will offer prayers of gratitude and blessing over each of them at their final worship services, and I’m sure they will also be showered with all kinds of love, cards and gifts, too.

Sometimes, gratitude is accompanied by grief, especially when we are thanking beloved coworkers in the gospel as they move on from cherished roles. Pastor Sherri brought this to my attention when she asked if we might find ways to process the staff turn overs with the congregation. We are researching this, and we’d welcome any ideas, experiences or resources you might have.

The Call Committee is finalizing paperwork, and has issued an invitation to Bishop Ann Svennungsen to come to Shepherd for the next step of the process. Bishop Svennungsen likes to check in with congregations as part of the discernment process and to offer her prayers and support. We will let you know when we have a date and time for her visit.

Across this season of interim, I am deeply grateful for the wonderful SOTH community and always eager to hear from you as we work together to join God’s work in the neighborhood.

Peace,  
Pastor Susan





## I SURRENDER ALL

By Emily Koski, Music Director

Have you ever heard of the new year's tradition where people pick a word to live by for that year? It's kind of like a theme that can be used as a focus, goal or mantra using words like thrive, health, moxie, simplify, brave, or self-love. I didn't choose a

word for 2022, but looking back, if I had to choose a word it would be surrender.

As Christians, the word surrender may sound pretty familiar. It's part of the religious lexicon within readings, sermons, song lyrics and prayers. But have you ever tried to surrender? Like, really, truly and fully surrender where you give up all control, doubt, worry or excessive planning and put your outcomes fully in the hands of God? For a type-A, 5-star worrier like me, surrender may as well be a 4-letter word! But, there have been a couple times in the last several years that I've experienced the freedom that can come with letting go.

In 2015, I had my first run-in with the need to fully surrender. After the birth of our second child, I had terrible post-partum anxiety to the point where I started medication and took a few weeks away from work. The main thing that pulled me out of that dark time was the realization that I can give to God all my worries about workload, career trajectory and how I will ever achieve "success" (whatever that means anyway) with so many competing priorities. Once I fully surrendered all my fears, I found that God gave, and continues to give me focus, energy and direction whenever I need it, as often as I need it. Every single time. What a relief!

This summer I had another opportunity to surrender. One night, I had a tough conversation with one of my kids who was sharing his own worries, fears and anxieties. Afterward when I was reflecting, I prayed "God, what can I do to help this poor child who has the weight of the world on his small shoulders? Just tell me what to do and I'll do it!" And then the answer came onto my heart and was as clear as day, "It's time to let go of the church music director position." It caught me by surprise and, trust me, it's not what I expected or wanted to hear.

It's not like this was the first time I've been told by friends, family, doctors or counselors that I should consider lightening up on my commitments. My typical response over the years has been to share that leading music at Shepherd of the Hills isn't just a second job. It's an honor, a privilege and a true vocation – it's part of who I am. But this time it was different. I threw up the white flag of surrender to God and when His answer came to me, so did a sense of peace, calm and assurance that this is the right move for my sweet family at this point in our life adventure.

### *I Surrender All continued*

Since that night, there have been several scenarios, worries and fears running through my mind as I've gone through the process of talking to the personnel committee, the staff, the choir and our broader church family – scenarios around who my replacement may be and how they'll fit in with the other future staffers, worries about this amazing church community facing another unforeseen element of transition, and fears about losing part of who I am if I'm not regularly singing and playing.

But whenever one of those troubling thoughts come to mind, I go right back to my word of the year and reclaim the peace, joy and assurance that comes with knowing that God will guide our paths, choices, successes and more. As for me, my job is simple: I surrender all.

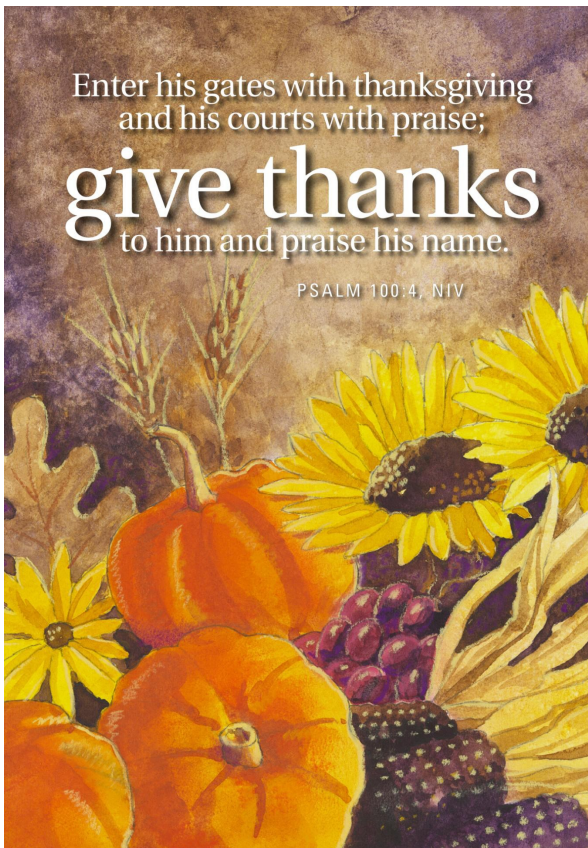
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Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church  
500 Blake Road South  
Edina, MN 55343

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**THANKSGIVING EVE WORSHIP**  
**Joint Service at Calvary Lutheran**  
Wednesday, November 23 at 6:30 pm

We have been invited to join our friends at Calvary Lutheran and St. Albans Episcopal for a joint, ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Worship. Calvary will host, with all the pastors co-leading a service of prayer, song, readings and giving thanks. And, pie will be served afterwards! Worship is at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2022, 6817 Antrim Road, Edina, MN. Come join in as we celebrate gratitude and share fellowship together!