

# The Parish Door

January 2025

A publication of Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church  
PO Box 27, Ellison Bay, WI. 54210 (920) 854-2988

Shepherdofthebay.org

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

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## Annual Meeting

Please join us for the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 26 at 10:30am (after the 9:30am service. There will be no coffee hour). The Annual Report for 2024, which includes reports from the committees of the Church, will be available on Sunday, Jan. 19 for you to look over before the meeting.

## OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes for 2025 have been arranged alphabetically in the narthex. Please take yours home! This year, envelopes have been reserved for members who gave with paper checks in 2024. One hundred ninety-two households have signed up for online giving, and we have not reserved envelopes for them.

If you don't see envelopes for your household but would like some, please call the church office. Likewise, if we prepared envelopes for you and you don't want them, let us know. Thank you!

-Grace Rossman, Treasurer

## Shepherd of the Bay Welcomes New Organist

Randall Manges is a native of western Pennsylvania, currently lives in Sturgeon Bay, and really looks forward to joining the staff of Shepherd of the Bay in mid-January, 2025. He has been a church musician, as well as a school teacher, in the northern suburbs of Chicago for the past 36 years. Prior to that he led music ministry in churches in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin. His undergraduate degree in Church Music was earned at the Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ and graduate degrees are from the University of Oklahoma. He holds a Kodaly Music Education certificate from Silver Lake College, Manitowoc.

Randy's association with the Dobson Organ Company (the builder of our instrument) goes back to the 1990s, and he holds the company in high esteem. The Shepherd of the Bay organ is well-crafted and offers the organist a rich palette from which to 'paint'.

He is a part-time organic vegetable farmer and he can be seen with his wares on Tuesdays in Jacksonport and Saturdays in Sturgeon Bay during the growing season.

## Men's Faith and Fellowship Group

Thank you to all the men who attended the meetings this past summer and fall. We enjoyed sharing our experiences, had some laughs and grew in our faith. We are taking a break now and will resume in June. I hope to see everyone again as well as some new folks. All men are welcome. Thanks.

Once upon a time, a young man and a young woman fell in love. They lived on the same block and so could see each other at the bus stop on the way to work in the morning. They would often take walks together in the evening around the neighborhood, hand in hand, talking endlessly as lovers do.

Then the man's work sent him away for an assignment across the ocean. It became difficult for them to even talk by phone because both of them led full and busy lives and their schedules were 8 hours off. So, they had to settle for words. Actual handwritten letters sent by airmail and delivered days later. Emails that tended to be shorter, but were delivered instantaneously. They told each other what was happening in their lives. They shared emotional ups and downs, highs and lows. They told each other often how much they loved each other. They reported what was going well in their work lives and what they were celebrating, always wishing they could share the celebrations together. But it was all with words. They could not look into each other's eyes. They could not hold hands. They could not hold each other at the end of the day and feel the warm embrace of love.

While they loved each other no less when they were apart, they yearned to be next to each other. They yearned for touch. They ached for presence.

Finally, the year was over. On the day of his return, she met him at the airport. When he came through the security check point, the earliest place she could meet him, they ran into each other's arms and embraced. Neither moved; neither said a word, for what seemed like a very long time. Finally, in flesh, together again.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. . .and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

For centuries, God's people had the Word. They had God's promises. They had the 10 commandments, words to guide their lives. They had the stories of the ancestors, stories of God's faithfulness. They had the words of the prophets, them from their backsliding ways to live in God and with God and for God.

Still, something was missing. The people yearned for something beyond words.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

God has come, not with mere words, though God's words are always reliable. God has come to us as one of us. God has embraced us and we simply hold onto that embrace for what seems like a very long time.

There is within each of us a yearning to know God. David Brooks had a brilliant editorial this week about that yearning. He has found God in surprising places, and the journey has been long and winding, but he writes of how the longing never goes away. We all have a yearning to know God, to know the divine life, and to participate in the divine life. But we cannot exist on mere words. James says that when the poor come to you and you give them a blessing, that does not help them. They need something concrete, something they can put in their mouths to ease their hunger and slake their thirst.

So, God comes to us. In flesh. In Jesus, the Word made flesh. In the waters of baptism, the splashing, cooling, refreshing water that brings the refreshing, cooling promise of forgiveness. In bread and wine, God and God's love that we can taste and smell and that we put on our lips, in our mouth and take into our very bodies. In the community of the baptized. We look into each other's eyes, we share the handshake or the embrace of peace. We encourage a sibling in Christ and a sibling in Christ encourages us and in the exchange and the relationship, we know that we have met God in flesh.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth.

This is the mystery of Christmas. This is the good news of Christmas. This is the truth, that love is among us, around us, in us, and never leaving us. Words are not enough. God has come. In flesh.

Friends, I will be missing the first couple of Sundays in January, recovering from my second knee replacement surgery. This surgery has been long delayed, and I'm grateful to be finally getting it taken care of. Pr. David Raben has kindly agreed to provide pulpit supply for the first two Sundays in January. I'm hoping to be back leading worship by the 19th, though I will probably not be fully mobile yet, nor able to stand for the full hour. Through the rest of the month, I will gradually ease back into a full schedule by the end of January, with Tuesday bible class resuming on Tuesday, February 4. As a follow-up to my ongoing treatment for bladder cancer, I completed a 4-week course of maintenance immunotherapy treatment in December. So far, there is no indication of the recurrence of the cancer; I will have another check for that in early February. I'm grateful for the fine medical care I have received over the past year, and I'm looking forward to the new year that I hope will bring far less frequent interaction with the medical community.

God's richest blessings for the new year.

Pr. Jim Honig



# Youth and Family Ministry News

from Lynda Pietruszka  
720-227-4079 or [sotb.lynda@gmail.com](mailto:sotb.lynda@gmail.com)

Wishing you all a very Blessed and Happy New Year! I am still celebrating all the wonderfulness of the Advent Christmas season with Children, Youth, and Family Ministry! Thank you to all who were able to help make it possible!

*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. 2 Corinthians 5:17a*

## Sunday Celebration/Sunday School

Every Sunday following Children's message, for children's ages 4- grade 6.

**Sunday, 1/5** Jesus the Word John 1:10-2:18, and What is Epiphany?

**Sunday, 1/12** Jesus' Baptism Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

**Sunday, 1/19 Today is Pancakes and Praise!** Today in our children's message, the children will be receiving a special pencil as we honor our 2024 pencil award recipient for outstanding ministry to our children, youth, and families! Following Communion, families head upstairs for breakfast and the beginning of our series, "Jesus is the Rock". Jesus is the Light of the World!

**Sunday, 1/26** Jesus goes to Nazareth Luke 4:14-30

## Little Lambs

Every Thursday from 9:30-10:45 a.m. for infants, toddlers, prek, and their parents or care providers.

**1/2** Happy New Year, Enjoy today with your family!

**1/9** God Keeps Me Safe!

**1/16** Psalm 148:8 Rufus and His Angry Tail

**1/23** Matthew 7:7-8 Rufus Loses His Cape

**1/30** Psalm 56:3 Rufus and the Scary Storm

## Confirmation

**Wednesday, 1/1** Happy New Year's Day, No Confirmation tonight

**Wednesday, 1/8** Jonah Be sure to turn in, your "At Home" assignment, and all registration and fees for "Journey with Jesus" tonight!

**Saturday, 1/11,** Synod Youth Tubing Day at Kewaunee Winter Park!

**Wednesday, 1/15** Mary the Mother of Jesus

## Wonderful Wednesdays

Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month, children in grades K-6 ride the SOTB van from Gibraltar School, for a time of Bible stories, snacks, games, arts and crafts, and service to our neighbor.

**Wed., 1/15** Joyful Voices! Happy New Year!

Wonderful Wednesday will only meet one time this month, as the first Wednesday is New Year's Day. It will be time to register for the BYG coming up in March!

Something Special! Watch for emails/flyers/face book, as we partake in an outing; **Synod Youth Tubing Day, Saturday January 11<sup>th</sup>, at Kewaunee Winter Park!**

## High School Youth Group

Youth group meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday from 6:00-8:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

**Wed, 1/8** **Going Bananas**, Baking Banana Breads for the Sunday 1/12 fundraiser! Registration and fees for "Journey with Jesus" due tonight!

**Saturday, 1/11,** Synod Youth Tubing Day at Kewaunee Winter Park!

**Wed, 1/22,** Chinese Cooking school with Fawzi Kelty

## Going Bananas!

Mark your Calendars! The Youth Group is once again, "Going Bananas!!" Be on the look out after worship on Sunday, January 12th as we bake and sell banana breads to fundraise for our retreat to "Journey with Jesus" at Imago Dei Camp in February!

Two sizes, both available with three choices; plain, with chocolate chips, and with nuts and chocolate chips. Thank you for your support of the faith formation of our youth!



# Partners in Ministry

Are you seeking meaningful ways to contribute at Shepherd of the Bay or in our community? Discover the diverse opportunities to volunteer and engage in programs that resonate with your passions, abilities and needs.



## Help Olive Growers in Israel

Discover the goodness of Extra Peaceful Olive Oil, now available in our Fair Trade Marketplace in the fellowship hall.

When you buy this product, you help provide Arab farmers in Israel with fair prices for their crops, create greater economic opportunities for Palestinian and Israeli women, and support a rare model of coexistence between Jewish and Arab communities.

Since 2003, SERRV International has partnered with olive growers in Israel to create a long-term trading relationship, providing interest-free advance payments on orders. This collaboration ensures olive growers receive just prices for their products while offering Israeli and Palestinian women unique job opportunities. Furthermore, growers gain access to education, financial guidance, and insights into sustainable and organic farming practices, fostering a brighter future for all involved.

## World Marketplace

Clearance Sale! The World Marketplace is scaling back its inventory! 50% off original price of all items in the fellowship hall (excludes coffee, tea and chocolate). Need a gift? How about a nativity scene. Great value on handmade jewelry and games. Plan ahead for Valentine's Day with our organic Chocolate bars, Coffee, and Tea. All items are fair trade from around the world.



## Toys for Tots

Thanks to everyone who donated toys for the Toys for Tots program. Our box of blessings was truly overflowing!



## Klaud's Pantry

Deepest thanks to all who have responded so generously to our needs! The Annual Cereal Box Challenge (thanks Lynda & friends) has given us a large backstock for the start of the year. We've also received many donations of a variety of food and personal items! Our continuing requests include:

Refrigerator items - cheese, yogurt, lunchmeat, fruits, veggies, juice, milk

Freezer items - pizza, small packages of ground beef and chicken, pot pies/dinners, veggies, juice

Shelf stable items - low sodium veggies, low sugar fruit, tuna, chicken, coffee

*Thank you again for your tremendous support! Blessings!*

## Christmas Program Photos



Thanks to everyone who donated to the Great Cereal Box Challenge!



## Building and Grounds

**Security** – A new keyed lock handle set has been installed on the hallway door next to the Conference Room. This addition means the outside doors to Klau’s Pantry can stay open longer than the rest of the doors to the church. The hallway door will remain locked most of the time so please enter the church through the main doors.

**Choir Room** – New curtains have been installed across the closet openings for the new choir robes. These curtains will help protect the new robes when this room is used for activities other than choir practice. A new robe rack will also be installed in the second closet at a higher height to accommodate longer robes and provide additional hanging space.

**Snow Shoveling** – Thank you, Les Keeper for volunteering to keep the sidewalks around the church clear of snow and ice this winter.

**HVAC** – New parts for the sanctuary humidifier will be ordered and installed to get the humidifier working again.

Thomas Tuttle - Chair Buildings and Grounds

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding the building or grounds, please feel free to mention them to any of the Building and Grounds committee members, Dick Burress, Carol & Karl Omernick, Don Provo, Joel Thomas, Scott Thies, or me. If none of us are around, send me an email or drop a note in the message holder on the custodian’s closet door in the narthex (the door between the 2 restrooms). The Building and Grounds Committee is looking for a new member, ladies you are welcome. New perspectives are always welcome. Contact Tom Tuttle if you are interested.

Thank you.



## Stephen Ministry

Think of a time when you really felt cared for. Chances are someone focused on what you had to say, was attentive to your needs, and listened to how you felt instead of telling you how you should feel or what you should do.

Jesus was a model of a good listener. Much of his ministry involved listening to people, and by listening to what they had to say, he demonstrated how much he cared.

Shepherd of the Bay is a caring place where members and guests truly feel people care about who they are and how they feel.

If you know of someone who needs to truly be listened to, call for information about Stephen Ministry at SOTB.



## Fellowship Pot Luck Brunch

Join us for a fellowship potluck brunch after the church service on **Sunday, February 2nd** in the fellowship hall. Bring a friend or a neighbor as everybody, everybody, everybody is welcome.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex or you can register on our website, on the Event Registration page under the events tab. [Click here to sign up!](#) You do not need to sign up on both. See you there!

## Guatemala Mission Trip

James 1:27

The trip scheduled for February 21 - March 1, 2025 has been rescheduled. We will be joining Peace Lutheran Church in Antigo, WI on May 23 -31, 2025. We are beginning to look at dates for the 2026 Mission Trip. If you would like to join us, please let us know which dates work for you.

*Please pray about how you can participate in this mission activity....*

*Think about it..... Pray about it..... Join us .....*

Nora Zacek

Please contact us at 854-4890 or 421-3346

## Thriving Congregations

On behalf of the Thriving Congregation team, let me start by wishing you and yours a Happy New Year.

During December the Senior Care Research team developed, led by Pat Skogsbakken, finalized and submitted four action items that the Thriving Congregation team and Church Council will review and make final decisions on their recommendations. Pat wrote that on behalf of the team "the time, research visits, calls, and discussions have blessed us as well." In addition to Pat the team included Dick Burress, Carolyn Hitzeman, Ruth Ann Hjelle, Nancy Megan and Sue Provo. If you get an opportunity thank them for doing this important work. Hopefully the Thriving Congregation team and Church Council will work on approvals quickly.

Also during November and December the team has started another round of one on one meetings.

In January, we will kick off the Community Engagement team. We tried to get this done in December, but there were too many competing interests, such as scheduling conflicts, travel, advent, and Christmas activities. Although not part of this activity, in the same spirit of community engagement, Shepherd of the Bay had a big presence at the Sister Bay Chriskindl mart. Our folks led major activities, drove our church van to pick up people at the hotels (and earned \$500 in tips for Klaud's pantry), sang, volunteered, and attended the festivities.

Please continue to keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we continue to do this important work.

Vicki Amundson

**Council Meeting Minutes  
December 16, 2024**

**Present:** Pr. Jim Honig, Scott Henry, Julia Keeper, Lynda Pietruszka, Grace Rossman, Micky Swanson, Tara Torkelson

**Absent:** Vicki Amundson, Cheryl Becht, Jane Burress, Adam Johnson, Trish Pierson

**No Guests**

**Call to Order:** Meeting called to order by Vice President Scott Henry at 7:05pm

**Approval of Meeting Minutes from 11-18-24**

Motion to approve by Tara Torkelson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Scott Henry. Motion carried.

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion to approve by Tara Torkelson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Julia Keeper. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report** – Grace Rossman

From the treasurer:

“A letter was mailed explaining our current operating deficit for the year. We have cash on hand for a situation like this, but in the spirit of complete transparency, we thought a letter was appropriate. We currently have received 94 intentions totaling \$316,176. Last year, we received 96 for a total of \$323,272. I am presenting a proposed 2025 budget tonight which has been reviewed by our finance committee. We anticipate 2025 operating expenses at \$540,000. This includes continuing to build our major maintenance account with \$35,000. In most years, the difference between the pledges and expenses is closed by gifts.”

**Committee Reports**

**Pastor's Report** – Pr. Jim Honig

Council discussed Pastor Jim's preliminary plan for a sabbatical in 2026.

**Director of Youth and Family Ministry** – Lynda Pietruszka

**Thriving Congregation Team** – Tara Torkelson

**Old Business**

**1. Pastor's 2<sup>nd</sup> knee surgery** is scheduled for December 30<sup>th</sup> and he plans to take two weeks medical leave. David Raben will provide pulpit service on Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> and Sunday January 12<sup>th</sup>. Pr. Jim plans to return to the pulpit on January 19<sup>th</sup>. The new organist will start on the 19<sup>th</sup> as well.

**2. Fall Campaign follow up**

**a. Pledges**

**b. Follow up pledges**

**1. Staffing of AV Desk** – The search for AV desk staff continues. Currently there are no candidates.

**2. January Potluck** – Monthly potlucks will resume on January 5<sup>th</sup>.

**New Business**

**1. 2025 Budget** – Grace requested Council to meet in executive session immediately after the regular meeting for a 2025 budget discussion

**2. Employee Retention Credit** – Grace reported the IRS has acknowledged receipt of the application; however, no action has been taken.

**Lord's Prayer**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm by Scott Henry**

**Next Council Meeting is January 20, 2025 at 7:00pm**

Respectfully submitted by Micky Swanson

# Lessons for January

## January 5 : Epiphany of Our Lord

First Lesson: Isaiah 43:16-21

Holy Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

**Introduction:** Much like magi's journey, the path that lies ahead isn't always clear or straight. Thankfully, we have the guidance of the Spirit to light our way.

## January 12 : Baptism of Our Lord

First Lesson: Isaiah 43:1-7

Second Lesson: Acts 8:14-17

Holy Gospel : Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

**Introduction:** Today's festival rejoices in God's blessings. We recall and celebrate our adoption as God's children, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the promised company of almighty God when we "pass through the waters . . . the rivers . . . fire." On this day the heavens open again for this assembly, and we receive the gift of God's Beloved, Jesus, in bread and wine.

## January 19 : The Second Sunday after Epiphany

First Lesson: Isaiah 62:1-5

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Holy Gospel: John 2:1-11

**Introduction:** The Sundays after Epiphany continue to celebrate the revelation of God's glory to us as it was made known to the magi and to those on Jordan's banks at Jesus' baptism—today using wedding imagery. Our God rejoices over God's people as those being married rejoice over one another. By the power of the Spirit there are gifts galore for everyone. In Christ Jesus the best wine is saved for last. Taste and see.

## January 26 : The Third Sunday after Epiphany

First Lesson: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Holy Gospel: Luke 4:14-21

**Introduction to the readings:** God's glory is revealed in the reading of scripture. People stand at attention. People weep. People prostrate themselves in prayer. The unity of the church is another reflection of God's glory. Most gloriously, the promises of God are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Gather round. Listen up. Glimpse the glory of God.

## Readers :

Jan. 5	Bob Loss
Jan. 12	Dennis Lonstine
Jan. 19	Sharon Pluff
Jan. 26	Dick Burress

## Ushers :

Jan. 5	Jim Grasse
Jan. 12	Jim Grasse
Jan. 19	<b>OPEN</b>
Jan. 26	<b>OPEN</b>

## Altar Guild :

January	- Jane Burress
February	- Marcia Eckdahl
March	- Sharon Pluff

## Altar Flowers

The 2025 Flower chart is on the bulletin board in the Narthex. The Cost is \$25.00 per arrangement. Fill in your name, if it is in memory or honor of someone and if you want one or two arrangements. You can take the flowers home after the Service. Please sign up to donate Altar Flowers.

## Epiphany star words

For the third consecutive year, we will choose Star Words in our Epiphany Service. Star Words, or "star gifts," are intention words drawn during the service. You can use this guiding word throughout the year and place it where you'll see it regularly for reflection on God's influence related to it.

### There Are Several Theological Statements Being Made in this Tradition:

The Magi followed a star, which ultimately led them to Jesus. Therefore, we too use all the resources we have available to us—including creative prayer practices and intention words for the new year—to move closer to Jesus.

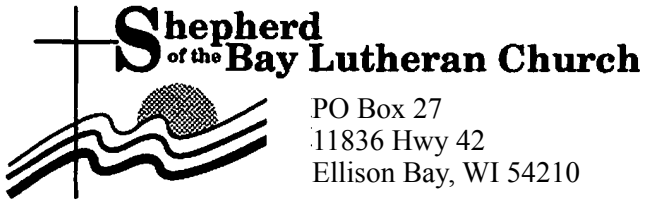
We trust that God uses multiple ways to guide us and speak to us. Star words offer a tool to actively seek and reflect on God's presence among us, both in the moment and in hindsight.

We recognize that it is often easy to miss God throughout our daily lives. Having an intention word to consider both in present days, as well as to reflect on at the end of the year, allows for us to see God in ways we may not have seen God before. This is the greatest gift.

As we hear the story of the Magi following the star to Jesus, we are invited to take a star, and a step, toward Jesus. If you would like a Star Word and are not able to make it to the Jan. 5th Epiphany Worship service you can receive a word by:

- Stopping by the church and choosing a word from the table in the narthex.
- Call (920-854-2988) or email ([sotboffice@yahoo.com](mailto:sotboffice@yahoo.com)) the church office, and a word will be randomly selected for you.





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Life's most persistent  
and urgent question is,

**“What are you  
doing for others?”**

-Martin Luther King Jr.