



River Spirit

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD,
UNITED METHODIST OSWEGO, IL 60543

“The Good News”

Early Saturday mornings, in almost any weather, I often train with fellow runners along the Fox River, usually running 6-10 miles. Experts say it's especially effective to run at a pace that leaves you a little short of breath, but you're still able to carry on a conversation. Andrea is one of my friends that I often train with, a 29 year old with a positive attitude who is super fast on race day, but who trains at a pace that I can keep up with, if I give it a lot of effort. We talk to cover the miles and keep it interesting.

Recently we spoke of New Year's resolutions. I shared that, for the past two years, my resolution was to not fall down! In 2023 I failed to keep that resolution by March. Ouch. But in 2024 I'm glad to say that I ran over 700 miles without a faceplant.

When Andrea told me her resolution practices, I was intrigued. She always makes four resolutions to cover four important parts of her life. Her categories are Personal, Professional, Relationships, and Racing. If one of her goals is not going well or can't be met at all, she avoids discouragement because she still has three others to focus on. I'm going to try that this year.

The trick is to make them meaningful and interesting to you, not to someone else in your life. Like most goals, it's good to make a resolution that's not too generalized, such as "I'm going to be a better person". Be more specific and make it measurable. "I'll be more generous" or "I'll be a better listener" is a start, but it may be even better to decide what that will look like for you, so that each time you are generous or listen well,

you'll know you've done it, which is its own reward!

“See, I am doing a new thing (says the Lord); now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” (Isaiah 43:19)

As you ponder your possible New Year resolution(s), consider what God is already doing in your life, including the new opportunities in front of you. Instead of setting yourself up for shame and guilt, celebrate the blessings God has given you, and know that the Lord will make a way for you, even in the midst of your wilderness.

Happy New Year!

Pastor Steve



www.goodshepherdoswego.org

52025
yearbook

From The Office:



Our Church office remains on limited hours. Please call ahead when visiting the office. Diane and Jessie continue to check voicemail and email regularly. Please let us know of any needs, prayer requests or requests for a pastoral phone call. We have our online worship service posted by 6:00am on Sunday. If you would like to have a zoom meeting with your group and would like us to set it up for you email Jessie at publications@goodshepherdoswego.org

CONTACTING PASTOR STEVE

For our newer congregants and for others who may have forgotten, Pastor Steve's contact information is always listed monthly on each issue of the River Spirit, online on our weekly Sunday bulletin, and in our church photo directory. For your convenience, you can also put his info in your phone's Contact List. For joys, concerns, needs, questions, appointments, or just a chat with the Pastor, call him on his direct church cell phone 630-608-7843 or email him at pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org

(By the way, he enjoys a cup of coffee at the Village Grind now and then!)



YEAR END GIVING: As 2024 comes to a close, our year end giving for the 2024 General Fund and Apportionment will be accepted through Monday, January 6th. **Please be sure to mark your envelope, or check with the calendar year and fund you are contributing to.** Thank you for your generous support and dedication to our church, and our ministries as we continue to serve Christ and our mission to *"make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."*



GIVING: Online giving is available and is appreciated as we will still have our regular operating costs and bills. Please mail in your giving to P.O. Box 695 5 W. Washington St. Oswego IL 60543 or use our E giving for online giving

<https://giving.ncsservices.org/app/giving/goodshepherdoswego>

which can also be found on our website under the giving tab. ~

2025 Estimates of Giving: Thank you to those who already filled out a 2025 Estimate of Giving, either during November's Stewardship Sunday or afterwards. This is the estimate of your 2025 financial giving to Good Shepherd. It helps the church as we do our financial planning, and it helps you to be intentional with your giving as an act of faith and trust in God.

It's not too late to fill out the simple form and return it to the church office confidentially. Forms can be found online, in the Gathering Room, or the church office on request.



Our Little Shepherds spent the month of December learning about the birth of Jesus and the importance of the Christmas season. We spent time in the sanctuary, admiring the stained-glass windows, looking at the bibles, and practicing for our Christmas Program. The kiddos felt very proud and important to be standing up on the steps, looking out at their loving families, as they sang their Christmas songs.

Our joyful spirit carries us right into the new year as we prepare for 2025. We will be learning about hibernation and arctic animals this month, perhaps even constructing an igloo! To keep us warm, we will be hosting a Drive-In Movie Night. We will be decorating large boxes as our "cars" and will "park" them downstairs to watch a movie.

Enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year opens on January 12, 2025 for church members. Currently enrolled families may begin enrolling January 19.

Contact the preschool at littleshepherdps@sbcglobal.net to schedule a tour!

Blessings,

Amanda Sidhu



United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith were very busy during the month of December! We hosted our annual Chili Supper, which included a baked potato option this year! A very special thank you to Joy Tierney and Sherri Sharp for chairing this wonderful event. We were able to showcase where our Mission Giving goes, both near and far.

The wonderful Oswego Senior Singers performed at our December Unit Meeting. They sang beautiful songs, told jokes (How much did Santa pay to park his sleigh? Nothing, it was on the house!), and had a Hawaiian dancer accompany several of their songs.

We are looking forward to some downtime after all of our holiday activities. Circle meetings will meet as scheduled and our next Unit Meeting will be in March. Look for more details to come.

Blessings,
Amanda Sidhu



UW Faith 2024 Mission Giving

- Mutual Ground
- CASA
- KCCFP
- Lifespring Ministries
- Hesed House
- Rosecrance
- Salvation Army
- Good Shepherd Youth
- Red Bird Mission
- National UW Faith
- The Bridge - Haiti
- Missionary Support
- Tanzania Scholarship
- Total \$3,200





- Grab a coffee and join the UMM in person or online Fridays at 7am!
- The United Methodist Men are holding their coffee hour in person. For those who wish to attend via zoom, there will be an internet connection in the gathering room. Join us to find out what is happening with U.M.M. and the church.
- We are always looking for people interested in the UMM stocking of the Kendall Co. Food Pantry on Wednesday evenings at 5:00pm.

Please contact the church office at 630-554-3269 or office@goodshepherdoswego.org with any questions.



MEN'S LUNCH: The United Methodist Men will be having their monthly Men's Luncheon at No. 1 China Buffet, 684 W. Veterans Pkwy, Yorkville on Wednesday, January 15th at noon. Please join us for fellowship and a fine meal.



The Fellowship team assembled Advent Boxes for our homebound congregation. Thank you to everyone who donated items and time to this wonderful ministry.



We will once again be participating in the 7th annual Oswego Downtown Chocolate Walk on Saturday, February 8th from 10am-2pm. More details to come!

Thank you 

Dear Pastor Steve, Sunday School Children, Women's Groups and Fellowship Team~ I can not thank you enough once again for the beautiful Advent Box that was delivered to me. Each day was a little treasure to look forward to opening.

Your kindness and thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated. Wishing everyone a happy and healthy New Year!

Peace and Blessings to All! ~ Nancy Mallec

Thank you 

Don and I want to thank the Sunday School children, the women's groups and the Fellowship Team for the lovely Advent Box that was delivered to us from Judy and Craig (McGregor). We appreciate all the work that has gone into this. We both cherish this more than you can imagine. We are so appreciative of all the love and kindness!

Blessings to everyone, with our love, Bev & Don Byrd

Thank you 

Bob and Marilyn Constantine send a thank you to the Fellowship team for the beautiful advent boxes.

MISSIONS MOMENT

“The purpose of our Missions Team is, first and foremost, to serve others. We intend to fulfill our mission by connecting our congregation to the many ways the Church of the Good Shepherd can, and already is, serving others at the local, national, and global levels.”

Missions served a turkey dinner to approximately 35 guests at the Hesed House Family Shelter on Monday, December 16. In addition to turkey, guests enjoyed macaroni and cheese, corn, dinner rolls, rice krispy treats, brownies, and lemonade. This dinner was generously provided by



Craig and Melody Watson, Denny and Janet Bornancin, Becca Johnson, Barb Schilling, and Steve Poniatowski. Thanks for preparing a wonderful meal! Thank you also to Roland Saka, Jason Kubelka, Jon Conover, Melody Watson, Sharon Freudenrich, and Steve and Sara Poniatowski for serving the meal.

Over the course of 2024, Missions served 6 meals to over 200 guests at the Family Shelter. Dozens of volunteers in several different service capacities made this possible. Thank you to the Good Shepherd congregation for your unwavering commitment to being the hands and feet of Jesus to our brothers and sisters at Hesed House.

We will serve again in February. Please check back for additional details. Happy New Year!

Welcome New Member Ruth Ott



Ruth has been worshipping with us for a number of years, but recently she officially transferred her membership from Community UMC Naperville to Good Shepherd.

Ruth and her late husband James had been members of Community UMC for over 50 years! Originally from St. Charles, Ruth spent most of her professional and personal life in Naperville, working about 40 years for the public school system as a Special Education teacher. She and her husband were foster parents for 26 years. She keeps in close contact with her 5 siblings and the rest of her family, which include grandchildren between the ages of 8 and 24.

Ruth lives with one son, has another son in Wisconsin, and yet another son in Colorado. She is a cancer survivor (twice!) and enjoys reading. Ruth got connected to our church via a local exercise class with Gladys Ode and Donna Nease. They invited Ruth and her husband to a Chili Dinner at Good Shepherd, and she has been connected with us ever since! We welcome Ruth, officially now, into the fellowship of our beloved community.

LIBRARY NEWS: There are free one-year devotional books and a few free books on the library stand. Take them for yourself or as a gift for someone else.

BOOK CLUB: We've selected *Women Talking* by Miriam Toews as our book club pick for December. Our next meeting will be at Nancy Patush's house on Tuesday, January 7, at 12:30 p.m. New members are always welcome!



The Poinsettias in our sanctuary were lovingly



donated by:

Charles & Arleen Bentley: In Memory of our parents, Albert & Margaret Bentley
And Ruth & Kevin Kavanagh

Judy Bieritz: In Memory of Walter Bieritz

Ed & Carol Bradley: In Honor of Our Family

Alexander Butkus & Family: In Memory of Ellen Butkus

Carol Dodd: In Memory of Lynn Bastian, My Niece

Robert & Pamela Dodson, Sr: In Memory of Clifford & Edith Dodson
And Ferne Esping and Stanley Esping

Sue Gilla: In Honor of My Family

Keith & Linda Johnson: In Memory of Richard & Charlene Young

Debbie Klonowski: In Memory of Our Parents
(Everett & Dodie Blake, Al Klonowski)

Judy Loch, Mike, Peyton and Morgan Elliott: In Memory of Jennifer Elliott

Janet McCarty: In Honor of My Grandsons, Chris & Matthew Prosser

Jan Olson: In Memory of Don Olson and Lydia Carpenter

Nancy & Dave Patush: In honor of Family and Friends

Barb & Neil Schilling: In Memory of Our Parents, Paul & Jean Schilling,
and Donald Bates

Don & Mary Lee Snyder: In Memory of Our Loved Ones Who Have Passed

Craig & Melody Watson: In Memory of Our Parents, Harold & Berdie Watson
and Norlen & Gloria Harke

Randy & Barb Wood: In Honor of Our Grandchildren,
Owen and Brooklyn Taylor



January Birthdays

1/2	Pam Dodson
1/2	Castigan Saka
1/6	Dolly Maly
1/10	Diana Bonherth
1/10	Christina Roberts
1/10	Shirley Was
1/14	Nancy Miller
1/17	Dave Ralston
1/18	Melissa Butkus
1/18	Melissa Johnson
1/21	Rachel Farrow
1/23	Mary Lee Snyder
1/25	Kathy Craig
1/26	Elaine Green
1/27	Mark Gilloffo
1/28	Phil Hartness
1/28	Jonathan Tatar
1/29	Todd Bell
1/29	Mark Craig
1/29	David Saffold



*Thank
you* 

Thank you on behalf of the church staff for all of your generous gifts. It was a wonderful surprise and it is such a blessing to be appreciated.

We hope you had a very Merry Christmas and enjoy a happy and healthy 2025.

www.goodshepherdoswego.org

The Church of the Good Shepherd



**United Methodist
5 W. Washington St.
PO Box 695
Oswego, IL 60543**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org

Youth Director: Rachel Conover: jessicarc31@gmail.com

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Church Office Hours: Tues, Thurs, Fri. 10-3 or by appointment

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Office Email: office@goodshepherdoswego.org

Little Shepherd Preschool: [littleshepherdps@sbcglobal.net](mailto:little shepherd dps@sbcglobal.net)

Director & Teacher – Amanda Sidhu

Teacher– Jessica Exline

Teachers Aides: Vincenza Ferguson & Tracy Johnson

Choir Director: Jonathan Tatar

Custodian: Bonnie Kennedy

Organist & HandBell Choir Director: Cheryl Todd

Pianist: Sue Gilla

Reborn Praise Band: Jon Conover, Band Leader

