



THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF

The Parish Paper of Shepherd of the Glades Lutheran Church
6020 Rattlesnake Hammock Road (Corner of Santa Barbara)
Naples Florida 34113

JANUARY, 2025
Volume 28- Issue 1
Editors: Lynn Dickerman
& Linda Tidmore



SHEPHERD OF THE GLADES LUTHERAN CHURCH

PASTOR'S PAGES . . .

Happy New Year and a blessed Epiphany! Kelli, Abraham and I want to thank you all for your generous Christmas gift. This congregation is always generous, very welcoming, and supportive. It is truly a privilege to serve Shepherd of the Glades. I will begin my January article by looking back at 2024 and then looking forward to 2025.

2024 was a big year for Shepherd of the Glades as we celebrated 50 years of ministry! Thank you to everyone who made the celebration a success. It was also a big year for me as I celebrated the 25th anniversary of my ordination. It was fun looking back at the historical photos of both my early years in ministry and the early years of the church. While putting together the program for the anniversary, I learned about a multitude of joys and challenges this congregation has experienced in ministry over the years. As I researched the history of this congregation, I recognized that Shepherd of the Glades is different from the many of the ELCA congregations along the East Coast and in the Upper Midwestern states. With the exception of Pastor Lyberg, the last names of the founding patriarchs and matriarchs no longer exist in the congregation membership. We are not the same church members or even family members of the church members who started this ministry. This congregation has gone through many evolutions and changes through the years. We are not the same church family that was in the pictures from the 1970's. Someone asked me about the pictures of the young families and even the children's choir that Shepherd of the Glades once enjoyed. Like many mainline Protestant churches in North America, the number of young families attending worship is in decline and the average age in attendance is going up. American culture has changed over the years. When Shepherd of the Glades was formed in the 1970's, most people went to church on Sunday. This congregation was a wonderful place for children and adults to learn about the love of Jesus. And the good news is that Shepherd of the Glades is still a wonderful place for everyone to learn about the love of Jesus and feel welcome and supported. But what can be done about the decline in attendance of younger members and families? Are we even called to reach out to younger families or have family centered programs? The short answer to these questions is that we are called to be obedient to God's plan and listen to the Holy Spirit. God knows the answers to our questions.

As we enter 2025, one of the ways we will be exploring and listening to God's plan is by hiring additional staff for the term of one year. The congregation approved the budget for 2025 at our annual meeting and heard the ministry plan that included the possibility of hiring someone to help us look into new ministry possibilities and be very intentional about outreach, evangelism, and making disciples. With these goals in mind, the executive committee of the Council interviewed and hired Mary



PASTOR'S PAGES (CONTINUED) . . .

Winsor to join our staff in mid-January as the director for discipleship. You will meet her soon, and she will be introducing herself in next month's newsletter. You can read more about the vision for this position in this issue from your Council president and vice president, Bonny Dery and Penny Morken. God has provided this opportunity through a very generous church growth fund bequest given by Ken and Charlotte Sebe. You will have the opportunity to hear more about this bequest and the financial status of the church at a meeting in the near future. I know much has happened in a short time, and I want to keep everyone informed of both changes that are happening and the reasoning for the changes. As I wrote earlier, this congregation has experienced many evolutions and changes over the years. God has been present and will continue to be present in those changes at Shepherd of the Glades. The prophet Isaiah said, "*Behold, I am doing a new thing; 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) Please watch for the announcement and plan to attend the informational meetings. 2024 was filled with excitement about the past. 2025 will be a year filled with anticipation and excitement about the future! Happy NEW Year!

+ Pastor Jeff

PRAYER CHANGES THINGS . . .

Seasons greetings to all!

I am here to remind each of us this season can be very joyful and hopeful and yet there are times we are overwhelmed or stressed by what is occurring in our lives. That is the time to seek prayer and God's prayerful presence. I ask today that you consider becoming a part of the prayer warrior team where we lift others up, family, friends, congregational members and all across the nation to bring Christ's peace upon them. If you are not called to be a prayer warrior, you might want to be a recipient of prayer. If you have any need at all, just let us know at the church office. In Christ's peace this holy season.

Shepherd of the Glades Prayer Warriors

NEW YEAR'S FOOD FOR THE SOUL . . .

"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow." *Albert Einstein*

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." *C.S. Lewis*

"Celebrate endings— for they precede new beginnings." *Jonathan Huie*

"Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year." *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

"Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man." *Benjamin Franklin*

COUNCIL CORNER . . .

SHEPHERD OF THE GLADES LUTHERAN CHURCH (Unapproved) DECEMBER 10, 2024, COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Members in attendance: Pastor Ungs, Bonny Dery, Penny Morken Pam Bhatena, Bob Tidmore, Doug Walck, Charlotte Wahlig, Becky McDanel, Brad Caulder, Colleen Hoffman and Gunar Strungs. Absent: John Sherman Devotions by: Doug Walck.

A motion to approve the minutes of November 12, 2024, was made, seconded, and approved as written.

Pastor's Report – Pastoral Acts: Memorial service for Leila Sellman Saturday, November 23rd; Welcome the following new members on November 17th: Robert Besanceney, Patricia Clark, Sandy Haberman, Rachael Harvey, Keven Holland, Sandy Lacefield, Liz McGuire, and Sharon Presentin.

Weekly Wednesday morning bible study is going well. Marcia Schacht has been leading a monthly Women's bible study and it has been very well attended.

Meetings: Met with nominating committee to finalize 2025 nominations. The following people have been named and have agreed to have their names go forth for the annual meeting ballot: Council 3-year term: Penny Morken (2nd term) Brad Caulder (2nd term) Sue Kautz, Bill Nicklay. Nominees for 2025 Synod Assembly: Steve and Sue Kautz. Nominating committee for 2026: John Sherman, Doug Walck, and nominations from the floor.

A motion to approve accepting nominee's for 2025 was approved, seconded and passed.

Weekly text studies with clergy colleagues. Monthly Caloosa Conference clergy meeting. Signed memorandum of understanding agreement with FSW state college for church to serve as temporary safety shelter during emergency evacuations; Stewardship meeting prep for annual campaign; Iglesia Conexion has left the United Methodist Church denomination and joined LCMS. Ongoing conversation regarding contract for rental; Met with Lutheran World Relief representative; Led First Call Theological Education workshop; Grief support group monthly meeting. Visited home bound members and brought communion & many hospital calls.

The new member orientation luncheon was held Friday, November 15th. We were blessed with the receiving of 8 new members.

Paul Todd Christmas concert had 304 people in attendance not including workers. A special thank you to ALL who helped with putting up advertisements in your community, parking, door sales, and setting up the concert area. Paul donated \$1,000 to the church for use of the property. It was an excellent Christmas concert with the addition of two female singers this year.

Treasurers Report – Bob Reviewed the 2025 budget with council members. He explained the budget includes a 2% increase for staff. Pastor agreed not to take an increase in salary, instead he accepted two-weeks additional vacation time. Funds for additional staff will be funded through the Sebe Growth Fund bequest given in 2024. The Truist Investment account increased. Our November income was less than budget and November expenses were more than budget. Our year-to-date income was less than our year-to-date expenses. This deficit was made up by the withdrawal of funds mainly from

COUNCIL CORNER (CONTINUED) . . .

the Investment account with the remainder funded from 2023 funds. Submitted by: Bob Tidmore

A motion to approve both the Pastor's and Treasurer's reports were motioned for approval, seconded and passed.

Old Business:

Discussions with the council members regarding which bid to approve for our roof replacement on the Hanson Hall Building. It was decided to have Royalty Roofing Company proceed with the replacement of a new roof. A motion to accept this proposal, subject to our ability to get finances, was motioned for approval, seconded and passed.

Committee Reports:

Property-Angel Tree Service has been contacted to remove our large debris pile ASAP. The Property Committee decided to mulch the beds around both buildings. Volunteers are needed. The date will be determined later. Submitted by: Doug Walck.

Endowment-The committee continues to perform due diligence regarding a potential transfer of the endowment account from the current ELCA Ministry Growth Fund to a new brokerage firm. The goal is to secure better customer service and account management options. There are many issues the committee needs to address before a decision is made. A meeting to discuss those issues is being scheduled. Submitted by: Gunar Strungs

Fellowship- The Fellowship Committee did the table setup/decorations for the Thanksgiving Dinner held at the church. The committee also provided a special cake for Veteran's Day and for Volunteer Recognition Day. The bake sale was held on December 8, 2024. A full calendar of events has been planned for the 2025 season. Submitted by: Penny Morken

Evangelism-Eight new members were welcomed into the church last month. Several of the new members are already actively volunteering. The Giving Tree is presently up in the narthex and is seeing a great response from the congregation. The wrapped gifts will be given to the Lutheran Services of Florida and siblings of students at Mike Davis Elementary. The sew-sew group is looking for someone who would be able to sharpen their dull scissors. If anyone can help with this, it would be greatly appreciated. Submitted by: Becky McDanel

Worship & Music-We have added 3 new voices to this committee and have plans to add some "folks-ie" type songs to our repertoire (i.e. Put Your Hand in the Hand). Submitted by: John Sherman and Colleen Hoffman

Social Concerns/Local Mission-We have a new volunteer in this committee, Bob Besanceney. He recently joined SOTG and is interested in church outreach programs, such as St. Mathews House. Welcome Bob! Submitted by: Pam Bhatena

Council meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm with a prayer from Pastor Jeff.

Next meeting will be January 14, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

Devotions: Pastor Ungs

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Bhatena, Council Secretary

NEWS IN THE SHEEPFOLD . . .



HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAYS TO . . .

January 1	Barb Tommingo
January 2	Katherine Cianflone
January 3	Bradley Presentin
January 5	Barb Keller
January 7	John Sherman
January 8	Roger Burtchin
January 12	Pastor Carl Kelly
January 16	Mary Sherman
January 16	Colleen Strungs
January 17	Maryann Buettner
January 18	Corinne Roscoe
January 18	Sherry Larson
January 18	Abraham Ungs
January 19	Milan Blaho
January 20	Steven Snover, Jr.
January 21	John Yuhascheck
January 23	Ron Eickhoff

If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please call the office so we can update our information and not miss you next time! YOU are special to us!

January 24	Sally Moore
January 26	Guy Cooper
January 28	Brenda Charleston
January 29	Al Lane
January 31	Joan Kelly



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES . . . HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

January 18	Doug & Sue Walck
January 29	Carl & Joan Kelly
January 31	Bryan & Lori Cook

LAUGHTER IS GOOD MEDICINE . . .

What's a spider's New Year's resolution?
To spend less time on the web!

What does a ghost say on January 1st??
Happy Boo Year!

Why is partying in Times Square overrated?
Because they drop the ball every year!

Knock. Knock! Who's there?
Radio. Radio who?
Radio not, it's a new year!

CARING CONNECTIONS . . .

PRAYER LIST

Please keep the following people in your thoughts and prayers:

Beverly Adams	Pastor Bob Hoffman	The Parker family
Rod Barikmo & Family	Joe	The Sebe Family
Pam Bhathena	Pastor Carl Kelly	Family of Leila Sellman
Ron Blasig	Anita & Nick Lehr	Cornelia Setzkorn
Pastor Fred Davison	The Linda Lentini Family	Jim Shaw
Family of Marilyn Day	Sandy Lofthouse	The Elaine Sima Family
Susie Espersen	Family of Bill Marderness	Micah Smith
Gail Fesnak	Ed Michael	Ryan Smith
Shelia Gardeneer	Willie Nation	The Swain Family
Barbara Gega	Peter Newell	Family of Joyce Zaleznik
Family of Nola Halverson	Linda Nolle	

Please let us know when someone should be added or removed from the Prayer list.

AA GROUPS . . .

Mixed AA Group

On Mondays at noon, a mixed AA group meets in Hanson Hall. If you or someone you know wishes to attend, please contact the office for more information.

On Thursdays at 7:00 p.m., a mixed AA group meets in Hanson Hall. If you or someone you know wishes to attend, please contact the office for more information.

At 10:00 a.m., a women's AA group meets in Hanson Hall on the 1st and 3rd Friday of every month. If you or someone you know wishes to attend, please contact the office for more information.

AH SWEET FELLOWSHIP . . .

On Sunday, January 12, 2025 there will be a "WELCOME BACK LUNCHEON" after the worship service. All worship attenders are invited for a ham luncheon in Hanson Hall to celebrate our entire SOTG family in fellowship. Sign up is required so that enough food is available to all.

FINANCIALLY, HOW ARE WE DOING? . . .

PERIOD: Twelve Months Ended December 31, 2024

	Actual	Budget	Difference: Favorable (Unfavorable)
Operating Income	\$321,095	\$396,966	(\$75,871)
Operating Expense	\$370,929	\$396,966	\$ 26,137
Net Income (Deficit)	(\$49,734)	0	(\$49,734)

Giving was up in December and a better month financially. Income exceeded expenses this month. Thank you to all who thought of us for their year end giving. We especially appreciate our regular donors! Thank you! Year end statements will be out soon.

HAPPENINGS AT SOTG . . .

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING FEAST

On Thanksgiving Day, we held our annual Thanksgiving Feast where anyone could come and enjoy a wonderful, home cooked meal! Thank you, Kelli Ungs!



2024 GIVING TREE

A special thank you to everyone that participated in our "Giving Tree" project this year. There were over 70 gifts purchased, wrapped, and delivered to Lutheran Services of Florida, and the Mike Davis Elementary School.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

The Evangelism Committee

VOLUNTEER SUNDAY

On Sunday, December 1, we honored and celebrated our many volunteers with a cake showing our appreciation for all the work they do throughout the years. To all those who make Shepherd of the Glades the great place to worship and serve that it is, "Thank you" from the bottom of our hearts!



2025 COUNCIL . . .

On Sunday, December 15, the members of Shepherd of the Glades Lutheran Church elected the following Council members for the 2025 term: Brad Caulder (2nd term), Penny Morken (2nd term), Sue Kautz (new), and Bill Nicklay (new). Installation of the 2025 Council will take place during service on Sunday, January 5, 2025.



BRAD CAULDER



PENNY MORKEN



SUE KAUTZ



BILL NICKLAY

HAPPENINGS AT SOTG . . .



NEW MEMORIAL GARDEN PLAQUE

This past month our Property Committee was able to install the new memorial plaque donated by Connee Zeman in memory of her husband, Tony. The logistics had to be figured out since it is made of solid bronze. But our Property Committee was up to this “weighty” challenge!



EXCITING NEWS TO SHARE FROM COUNCIL . . .

This year, Shepherd of the Glades Lutheran Church received an estate gift with a specific designation that funds generated through this gift be used to “enhance church growth”. With that request in mind, your Church Council and Pastor began a series of brainstorming discussions on ways to “maintain and grow” our church in an ever changing world. Using the book, “Canoeing the Mountains” by Tod Bolsinger, the Council engaged in discussion on the church in today’s society, current unmet needs within our church, and various ways we could enhance growth opportunities in our church.

One recommendation that came from these planning discussions was the need to have additional staff time designated to “church growth activities”. In order to accomplish this goal, a job description for a one year lay position, Director for Discipleship Ministry, was developed. This one year position would be funded through the estate gift designated for church growth.

After the development of the job description, goals/objectives and subsequent formal interview by the Executive Board of the Church Council and Pastor Jeff, we are pleased to announce that Mary Winsor has accepted this one year lay position of Director for Discipleship Ministry.

Mary completed her undergraduate degree in 2024. She has worked with the ELCA Young Adults Program in Global Missions (Mexico), and most recently worked as a recruiter for ELCA Young Adult Ministries. Mary’s father is an ELCA pastor in eastern Florida. Mary is very interested in congregational growth/ministry and is excited to have this opportunity to work directly with congregation members, committees, etc., and be a liaison to community outreach activities.

Please join the Council in welcoming Mary Winsor to Shepherd of the Glades. Her anticipated starting date is mid-January.



Best Wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year!!

Thrivent continues into 2025 with new, online and in-person events. Join us!

**JANUARY 14, 2025 | 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM ET: IN-PERSON EVENT
(DOORS OPEN AT 6:15PM)**

“The 5 Love Languages®” with Dr. Gary Chapman

St. Luke’s Lutheran; 2021 W State Rd 426, Oviedo, FL 32765

Discover the keys to unlocking deeper connections and fostering lasting intimacy in your relationships as Gary Chapman shares his decades of wisdom and experience. Whether you are seeking to strengthen your bond with a partner, deepen familial ties, or enhance friendships, this event promises invaluable insights into the diverse ways we give and receive love.

RSVP - <https://bit.ly/5LLOrlando>

JANUARY 14, 2025 | 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM ET: ONLINE

Thrivent Market and Economic Update

Are the current markets making you wonder how to best navigate your financial strategy? Join us for a livestream of Thrivent’s Market and Economic Update, presented by Thrivent leaders. Don’t miss the opportunity to hear Thrivent’s perspective and what the latest trends may mean for you. Register below to attend the event and/or receive the recording.

RSVP - <https://bit.ly/MarketUpdateJan2025>

JANUARY 30, 2025 | 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM ET: IN-PERSON EVENT

Dinner with Thrivent: Market and Economic Update

Grillsmith - Carrollwood; 14303 North Dale Mabry Hwy, Tampa, FL 33618

Join us for a Market and Economic Update dinner viewing event for our clients and guests. Thrivent’s investment leaders will share their perspectives on the health of today’s economy, inflation and interest rates, explore factors influencing growth at large companies, and understand the market implications of current global geopolitical events. We’ll also discuss what the latest trends may mean for you.

RSVP - <https://bit.ly/GrillsmithUpdate>

No products will be sold at our events. For additional disclosures, see Thrivent.com/social. Contact us at SoutheastTMN@thrivent.com or see what’s happening at thrivent.com/southeast or at [Facebook.com/SoutheastTMN](https://www.facebook.com/SoutheastTMN).

For More Info Call Thrivent Financial Associate David Contessa at (239) 300-5139.

REMEMBER THOSE IN SERVICE TO THEIR COUNTRY . . .

Staff Sergeant Adam Crown

Airman Corey Malinowski

Marine Tom McJilton

Army Sergeant Kendra Stofflet at Ft. Campbell Army Base, KY

Warrant Officer Robert Stofflet at Ft. Campbell Army Base, KY

Lieutenant Sterling Payne, 205 Ming St. Warrensburg, MO





JANUARY, 2025

SUN	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1 NEW YEAR'S DAY OFFICE CLOSED	2 7:00 – 8:00 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	3 10:00 – 11:30 A.M. WOMEN'S AA GROUP	4
5 SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS INSTALLATION OF COUNCIL 9:30 A.M. LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP	6 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 12 NOON AA MIXED GROUP	7 8:30-11:00 A.M. SEW-SEWS	8 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 10:00 A.M. PASTOR JEFF'S BIBLE STUDY	9 7:00 – 8:00 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	10	11
12 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD 9:30 A.M. LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP WELCOME BACK LUNCHEON	13 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 12 NOON AA MIXED GROUP	14 8:30-11:00 A.M. SEW-SEWS 6:00 P.M. COUNCIL MTG.	15 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 2:00-3:30 P.M. GRIEF SUPPORT 10:00 A.M. PASTOR JEFF'S BIBLE STUDY	16 7:00 – 8:00 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	17 10:00 – 11:30 A.M. WOMEN'S AA GROUP	18
19 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 9:30 A.M. LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP	20 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 12 NOON AA MIXED GROUP DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS	21 8:30-11:00 A.M. SEW-SEWS	22 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 10:00 A.M. PASTOR JEFF'S BIBLE STUDY	23 7:00 – 8:00 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	24 10:00 A.M. WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY	25
26 THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 9:30 A.M. LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP	27 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 12 NOON AA MIXED GROUP	28 8:30-11:00 A.M. SEW-SEWS	29 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 10:00 A.M. PASTOR JEFF'S BIBLE STUDY	30 7:00 – 8:00 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	31	

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Shepherd of the Glades Lutheran Church
6020 Rattlesnake Hammock Road (Corner of Santa Barbara Blvd.)
Naples, FL 34113
(239) 775.0696 FAX: (239) 793.2465
Web Page: <http://www.sotgweb.org>
Email: sotg6020@gmail.com**

**Sunday Worship Service: 9:30 a.m.
Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Pastor Jeff Unga, Pastor [cell phone: 641-529-2479]
Megan Cianflone, Director of Music
Bonny Dery, Council President
Lynn Dickerman and Linda Tidmore, Admin. Assistants to the Pastor
Rev. H. Peter Lyberg, Pastor Emeritus**