



# River Spirit

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

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## “The Good News”

I'll never forget the sight of the children and women navigating the winding, hilly, narrow pathways from the river to their homes, carrying buckets of water for the family needs, often balanced on heads. I was a young man in Haiti, experiencing for the first time life in a “third world” country, or developing nation. To a visitor, the toting of water may have looked quaint, but to the women and children, it was just heavy. Imagine carrying such a weight not as strength training, but for survival. Think of the ongoing pressure/damage to the spine, hips, legs, and feet. Imagine how vulnerable these women and children are to predatory people on their daily journey. I didn't think of all that as a young man, but I do now.

On Saturday June 1<sup>st</sup> at Hudson Crossing Park at 9 am, you are invited to walk because they walk. We will walk (or run or roll) 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) along the Fox River, to symbolize a typical distance that women and children must walk multiple times per day to bring typically dirty water to their family for cooking, drinking, and cleaning. The good news for us is we will not be carrying water on our heads. Instead, our sacrifice will be to raise money to provide permanent access to clean water for women and children around the world so they don't have to skip school or leave home for something that we need only to turn on a faucet to receive.

If you're not able to join us for the walk/run on June 1<sup>st</sup>, you can still use the link provided to make a donation in the name of one of our participants listed on the roster.

To walk, run, or roll, click on the link below to allow you to change a life. With your \$50 registration, one person will receive permanent access to clean water. Last year we had 50 people participate in this joyful, hope-giving event. Come join the party!

“As you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me” -Jesus

<https://global6k.worldvision.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.team&teamID=36804>

Peace,  
Pastor Steve



[www.goodshepherdoswego.org](http://www.goodshepherdoswego.org)

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## From The Office:



Our Church office are Tuesday—Friday by appointment. 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.

If you would like to have a zoom meeting with your group and would like us to set it up for you email

### Online Giving

Make a Secure Donation  
Schedule Recurring Gifts

**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. ~ Thank you!



### 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](mailto:pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org)



### Registration is now OPEN for our 2024-2025 school year

If anyone would like to be added to the List of Prayer Chain Members please contact

Diane Clodi at [dianecloidi@yahoo.com](mailto:dianecloidi@yahoo.com).



**We hope to see you at the event on Saturday, June 1st.** You can sign up to volunteer at the 6K on the sheets in the Gathering Room, and you can register to join our team and/or learn more by going to <https://global6k.worldvision.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.team&teamID=36804> Your receipt may list a different date but we are walking on June 1st.



**Nursery Attendants:** We are seeking volunteers to work in the Nursery during worship services. Sharlene Momich will help coordinate the volunteers. Please contact her if interested in helping. [sharmomich@gmail.com](mailto:sharmomich@gmail.com) 630-567-4994. Volunteers will need to have a background check and complete an online safety training.



Dan Schwerin  
Bishop  
dschwerin@umcnic.org

# The United Methodist Church

## CHICAGO AREA EPISCOPAL OFFICE

303 E. Wacker Dr. • Suite 2020 • Chicago, IL 60601

Office (312) 334-0702 x702

Rev. Arlene W. Christopherson  
Assistant to the Bishop  
achristo@umcnic.org

March 21, 2024

Siblings in Christ,

May God's grace guide us during this Lenten journey.

I write to thank you for the gift of your faithfulness as your congregation paid 100% of its conference and general church apportionment! Your dedication demonstrates a commitment that is deeply Wesleyan: we share for the good of the whole mission, engaged in the name of Christ. God is in mission with us—and does not hold back. Your stewardship is a response to our self-giving God in Jesus Christ.

Your full payment of the apportionment in 2023 enables us to support innovations in congregational development that bless our churches. Your gifts supported Church World Service and its efforts to relieve poverty and hunger. Your giving supported our health and welfare ministries. You helped us respond to churches in crisis. You helped send children and youth to camp and you credentialed clergy. Praise God for the ways we are in ministry together. Your church will receive a Mission Links Certificate at the annual conference session in June acknowledging your good work.

Last year's Bishop's Appeal continues to support Christian hospitality for migrants. (There are still some funds available for churches doing that work.) The Bishop's appeal this year will support United Voices for Children and its constituent organizations: Kids Above All, Rosecrance, and Methodist Youth Services, Inc. We know that shelter and stability offer hope and healing for those suffering with generational poverty. Your gifts demonstrate that we are in this together as a connexional church.

John Wesley spelled the word *connexional* with an X in the middle of it. That X represented Christos, a term for the Messiah, visually placing Christ at the center of our life together. I invite you to read this letter from a pulpit, before an administrative council, or during a Bible study. Not only is this celebration well deserved, but it is a reminder that our God is here with an unlimited responsiveness, guiding and directing our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Thank you for your spiritual leadership. Know that I am praying for you.

Peace,

Dan Schwerin, Bishop  
Northern Illinois Conference  
United Methodist Church



United  
Women  
in Faith

### Ladies – Join Us!

What: UWFaith Unit Meeting  
When: Thursday, April 4 at 7 pm  
Where: Fellowship Hall  
Program: A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial

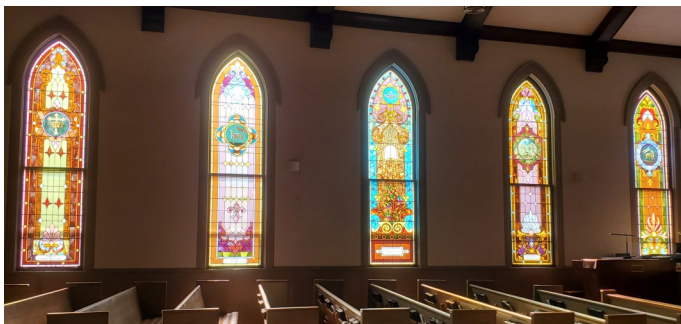
Thanks to everyone who contributed to our March collection for Mutual Ground. They are very appreciative of all the help they receive. We thank God for their ministry to domestic abused women. At our March Unit Meeting, as part of the program, Grace Circle asked us to bring baby items for the Kendall County Community Food Pantry. Thanks to all who gave towards this project.

At our March UWFaith Unit Meeting, I challenged the ladies to join the UWFaith Reading Program and read five books this year. I was very excited to have some ladies agree to take the challenge. Anyone could join this challenge, even if you're not a member of UWFaith. One book must be read from each of the following categories:

Education for Mission ~ Leadership Development ~ Nurturing for Community ~  
Social Action & Spiritual Growth

In addition or except reading books, you may receive credit by listening to *Faith Talks* podcast and *Voices from the Field* podcast which can be found at [uwfaith.org](http://uwfaith.org), under Resources click on Podcasts & Webinars. Another option is to watch movies that are based on books in the reading program. *Hidden Figures*, *Pushout*, and *The Hate U Give* are movies that would count in the category that the books come from. The three are available through the Oswego Public Library in DVD or eVideo.

Books and copies of *response* magazine are available on the two top library shelves on the left side of the library in the Gathering Room. For 2024 Reading Program any book from 2019 -2024 can be counted. In the library next to the *response* magazines, you may find the 2024 Reading Program document that lists the books along with their descriptions. You may also find a total list of the book names with authors from 2019 through 2024. When you check out a book, please put the card in the small box marked UWFaith that is on our UWFaith reading shelf. When you check out a *response* magazine, please record the information in the notebook with the magazines. To qualify for a certificate from the Prairie District UWFaith, you must read *response* magazine in addition to the five books.



I am currently working on a list of all the 2024 books that Oswego Public Library has available either in book, eBook or audio form. If you're interested in the list or having your own 2024 Reading Program, please contact me and I'd be glad to give you a copy.

Some new titles will be added to our library during the year which are not available through the

Oswego Public Library. If you see a book that you'd like to read that's in the Program, let me know. I'm looking for suggestions.

Thanks!

Janet McCarty, Program Resources Mission Coordinator



- 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.



The United Methodist Men will be having their monthly Men's Luncheon at George's Family Restaurant , 110 Webster St., Montgomery on Wednesday, April 17th at noon. Please join us for fellowship and a fine meal.

The Northern Illinois Conference United Methodist Men's Annual Meeting was held on Saturday, March 23, at the First United Methodist Church in DeKalb. The gathering was open to all men in the Northern Illinois Conference. Breakfast was followed by a business meeting which included the election of the NICUMM leadership team for the next four years. Bishop Dan Schwerin did the installation of officers, delivered the message, and served communion.

**At the meeting Craig Mc Gregor was elected as the next Northern Illinois Conference United Methodist Men president- Congratulations Craig!**



**PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY LAND: The Methodist Liaison Office in Jerusalem** is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Topic: MLO - Jerusalem's Update and Prayers Every Wednesday at 1:00 PM US Midwest. Join our Zoom Meeting on Wednesdays. See the Eblast or the office for the link,



Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. James 1:12

**ORNAMENTS FOR SALE:** Window Ornaments are for sale now by emailing the church office, and on Sundays in the Gathering room between services. Many of the ornaments make Beautiful Easter Decor: the Angels, the Lambs, the Cross and Cown, the Doves, and The Good Shepherd. Each image is a symbol of our faith in The Lord Jesus Christ. Proceeds from these sales help support The Church of the Good Shepherd mission, ministries and operations. Thank you for your support.



“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 Team is looking at the UMC Mission Links (<https://umcmmission.org>) as we determine the direction of our projects.

Good Shepherd continues to support the *Mission Link US-Based Advances* with a presentation by Aidan Poniatowski on **African American Methodist Heritage Center**. This presentation will be SUNDAY, APRIL 15, at both services. An offering for the Center will be collected.

We are looking to bring a Midwest Mission Distribution Center project to Good Shepherd. This will be in place of traveling to the Center in Chatham. We will be able to involve more church members in our *Mission Link Northern Illinois Conference Projects*. More information will be coming.

Missions will be serving a dinner at the Hesed House Family Shelter on **Monday, April 15 from 5:30-7:00pm**. The menu will be a cookout in honor of the return of baseball season! We are looking for donations of the following items to serve approximately 20-25 people:



- Hot dogs (3 packs of 8, or close to that)
- Hot dog buns (2 dozen)
- Hamburger buns (2 dozen)
- American cheese slices (Kraft singles or similar)
- Potato chips
- Fresh veggies (carrots, celery, etc.)
- Fresh fruit salad (example - mix of any of the following: melon, berries, grapes, pineapple)
- Dessert of donor's choice
- 2 containers of powdered lemonade mix (Country Time or similar)
- 2-4 people to help serve the meal at Hesed House

Please email ([poniatowski@att.net](mailto:poniatowski@att.net)) or call ([773-251-8372](tel:773-251-8372)) Sara Poniatowski if you can help with any of these. Thank you! ☐



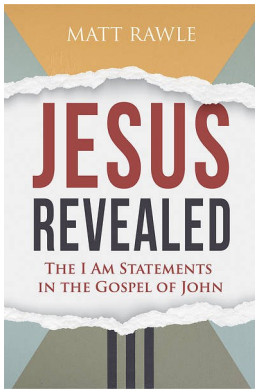
**We hope to see you at the event on Saturday, June 1st.** You can sign up to volunteer at the 6K on the sheets in the Gathering Room, and you can register to join our team and/or learn more by going to:

<https://global6k.worldvision.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.team&teamID=36804>

Your receipt may list a different date but we are walking on June 1st.

"We are deeply thankful for the Church of the Good Shepherd's gift of \$200 to University Christian Ministry. By this gift, you are investing in a ministry aimed at shaping the future of the church and the world through the lives of young adults on the university campus. It is gratifying to know that we can count on your support."

Sincerely in Christ,  
Rev. Julie Windor Mitchell, Executive Director  
University Christian Ministry



The **Adult Christian Education** class will start a new study on April 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am in the Meditation Room entitled *Jesus Revealed: The I Am Statements in the Gospel of John*. Light. Bread. Shepherd. Life. The Gospel of John uses these and other symbols to paint a picture of who Jesus is. Through the I Am statements Jesus describes himself with rich images, showing us that he is both fully human and fully divine and calling us as his followers. *Jesus Revealed* invites the reader to step into the ordinary work of God's extraordinary creation. Calling out the artist within, readers will find their own stories inside these powerful declarations – illuminating a Jesus we've always known but perhaps never fully embraced. Join us as we watch the DVD that goes along with this study and then discuss the ideas presented by the author. Questions, contact Janet McCarty, the leader.



This month's book is **Black Cake** by Charmaine Wilkerson chosen by Tracy Johnson. We will meet at Nancy Patush's house on Tuesday April 2, at 2:00 P.M. Hope to see everyone then. If you are interested in joining us and need more information, please contact Judy McGregor at 630-373-2238.



Aiden Poniatowski will speak during worship April 14 on the African American Heritage Museum and we will invite the congregation to give a special collection that day.



We still need Sunday School teachers for next school year. LOW Commitment but a HIGH reward. Please reach out to Ruth Frey at [Dozygit@gmail.com](mailto:Dozygit@gmail.com) if you are interested or have questions. Thanks!

TEACHERS NEEDED  
FOR 3RD GRADE  
4/5TH GRADE  
**LOW COMMITMENT**

CONTACT RUTH FREY FOR  
MORE INFO  
[DOZYGIT@GMAIL.COM](mailto:DOZYGIT@GMAIL.COM)



We are looking for a team of people to lead Vacation Bible School this summer. Please contact the office if you can help! Ruth and Rachel can help, but we cannot lead.



A warm Good Shepherd welcome to our newest member, **Shelley Doolittle!** Shelley joined Good Shepherd on February 25<sup>th</sup> by declaring her vows of faith and being joyfully received by our congregation. Since December, Shelley has been singing with our One Achord vocal choir and has added to our music ministry with her presence. Shelley enjoys the fellowship of the choir as well as the singing. She used to be a member of the former Fourth Street UMC in Aurora. Shelley lives at 507 Majestic Ln. in Oswego 630-917-2122 [dppurple2@aol.com](mailto:dppurple2@aol.com) She works as a Recording

Assistant for Kane County and enjoys, pickleball, reading, skating, and dancing. Please be sure to introduce yourself to Shelley and help her to continue to feel welcomed in her new faith home.



### **CHURCH SURVEY - YOUR THOUGHTS ARE VERY IMPORTANT, NEEDED, AND WANTED!**

We would love to hear how you feel the Church of the Good Shepherd can continue to serve our congregates and grow in meaningful ways. Collectively we can develop a vision for the future and we would like to understand how you evaluate your church life, the programs currently in place, and where you would like the church to go in the coming years.

Please take a few moments to prayerfully complete a survey. Your responses will be anonymous and the results will be shared with the congregation. It should take around 10 minutes to finish. Thank you so much for taking the time to share your thoughts.

<https://forms.gle/M88773787Ua4uPL87>

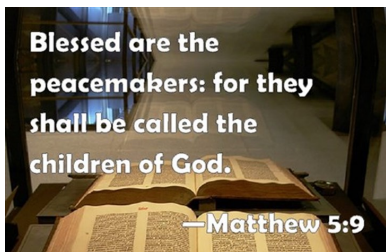


**Sunday School has signed up to be part of the RAISE RIGHT campaign. Simply buy gift cards from the site and portions of the money spent will be sent to the Church of Good Shepherd. Money raised will go towards community service projects and other Sunday School/Church needs.**

Easily earn \$1,000 or more each year simply by paying for everyday things with gift cards instead of debit or credit cards. Up to 20% of every gift card purchase from RaiseRight automatically goes toward your organization's earnings, directly supporting the cause you care about—no extra time or money spent. (It's as easy as it sounds!)

Getting Started is EASY . Simply go to this website [www.RaiseRight.com](http://www.RaiseRight.com), create a personal account and use the enrollment code **C2FSQ11SA7DM.**





## United Methodist Church Council of Bishops calling for ceasefire in Gaza

*"Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God"*

Matthew 5:9 NLT

As bishops of The United Methodist Church, we call for an immediate and permanent cease-fire in the conflict between Hamas and Israel in Gaza and pledge our prayers and commitment to work for a durable peace for Israelis, Palestinians, and all in the region.

As United Methodists, we join others in encouraging, *"...diplomatic initiatives that will engage both Israelis and Palestinians in an effort to understand the fears, hopes, and aspirations of each other. Such strategies should actively seek a way to promote a just and lasting peace and cooperation that will lead to a two-State solution...an end to the current occupation and violence, and the creation of a viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace with Israel..."*<sup>1</sup>

On October 7, 2023, an attack by Hamas left 1,200 Israelis dead and hundreds of hostages taken. Since then, more than 30,000 have been killed by Israel's bombardment of Gaza, the majority of them women and children. Innocent people continue to be killed because of the fighting, and many are dying of hunger and the spread of infectious disease.

The ability of aid organizations to attend to the critical needs of the victims of this prolonged war has also been sharply limited by the lack of meaningful negotiations. On February 29, starving Palestinians were fired upon as they sought food from an aid truck, with more than 100 persons killed by Israeli forces. It is estimated that 1.8 million Palestinians have been displaced, their homes and communities destroyed. The United Nations estimates that more than half a million people are living under "catastrophic levels of deprivation and starvation."

We believe that the current military strategy of the Israeli government, supported by U.S. weapons transfers and aid, will only lead to the destruction of the entire Gaza Strip, an unconscionable death toll that grows daily, the perpetuation of one of the world's longest conflicts, and the proliferation of increased enmity between Israelis and Palestinians, which has historically led to an increase in the militarization on both sides. There is no peace to be found in this strategy.

The lack of a true cease-fire after more than five months of this deadly conflict compels us to raise our voices now. We call for an immediate and permanent cease-fire in the Gaza Strip and a commitment from all involved parties, including Israel, Palestinians, surrounding Middle East countries, the U.S., and others to pursue a lasting peace.

We pledge our prayers and commitment to work for a durable peace, an end to the violence and the release of the hostages.

<sup>1</sup> A Pathway for Peace in Palestine and Israel, *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church – 2016*



## *Lily Dedications*

*My Husband, Walt Bieritz*

*Ellen Butkus*

*Mona Middleton*

*Everett & Dodie Blake, Al Klonowski*

*Bert Nease*

*Lydia Carpenter*

*Our Parents and Sisters*

*Dina Jo Taylor*

*Our Daughter, Megan Elizabeth*

*Judy Bieritz*

*Alan Butkus and Family*

*Sue Gilla*

*Steve & Debbie Klonowski*

*Donna Nease and Family*

*Jan Olson*

*Don & Mary Lee Snyder*

*Allison & Artie Taylor*

*Randy & Barb Wood*

*In Honor Of:*

*Our Family*

*My Family*

*My Grandsons, Chris & Matthew Prosser*

*By:*

*Ed & Carol Bradley*

*Carol Dodd*

*Janet McCarty*

## April Birthdays

Cali Roberts	4/1
Jillian Perez	4/3
Mike Elliott	4/9
Susan Rutsay	4/10
Jaslyne Kubelka	4/13
Jon Conover	4/14
John Frey	4/15
Christine Bielawski	4/18
Sally Smith	4/18
Charlie Farrow	4/20
Mary Church	4/21
Pat Coleman	4/22
Genie Cross	4/23
Connie Salems	4/23
Robert Leffel	4/24
Christine Conover	4/25
Barb Pearah	4/25
Daniel Conover	4/26
Debbie Klonowski	4/26
Judy Luytjes	4/27
Bob Mead	4/30
Marilyn Risch	4/30



[www.goodshepherdoswego.org](http://www.goodshepherdoswego.org)

## The Church of the Good Shepherd



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

### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



**8:15 a.m. Traditional Worship Service**

**9:30 a.m. Christian Education Hour**

**10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship**

Free childcare available during both services and Christian Education Hour

**Pastor: Pastor Steve Good**

[pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org](mailto:pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org)

**Youth Director: Rachel Conover: [jessicarc31@gmail.com](mailto:jessicarc31@gmail.com)**

**Executive Assistants: Diane Baum and Jessie Livingston**

**Church Office Hours: by appointment**

**Newsletter Editor:**

[publications@goodshepherdoswego.org](mailto:publications@goodshepherdoswego.org)

**Office Email: [office@goodshepherdoswego.org](mailto:office@goodshepherdoswego.org)**

**Little Shepherd Preschool:**

[littleshepherdps@sbcglobal.net](mailto:little shepherddps@sbcglobal.net)

**Director – 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**

#### Everyone is Welcome!

- Wheelchair Accessible building
- 8:15 AM traditional and 10:30 AM contemporary services.
- Weddings dates available for our beautiful 1890's sanctuary and downstairs reception area. 630-554-3269.
- We practice open Communion, we honor the Evangelical tradition of using grape juice and bread and gluten-free
- Space available for weddings, parties, events and meetings. Alcohol not permitted.

