



River Spirit

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

“The Good News”

As I was running my 26.2-mile marathon in Mesa, Arizona last month, I tried to distract my thoughts away from my aching muscles by reading the handmade signs that hundreds of spectators held as they cheered for us from the sidewalks. Signs like: “Run like the cops are chasing you!”, or “Run faster, this sign is getting heavy!” or “You’re almost there! . . . Just kidding”. One sign that was repeated several times read: “Remember, You Signed Up for This!”

Ouch – that one was true. Signing up for this meant I was willing to begin a training discipline that began in October and took me into the cold, snow, and ice of winter into early February. I trained at various speeds and distances for a total of over 300 miles, which was about 100 miles shy of what I should have done. Still, I did my best with what I prepared for. The results didn’t meet my highest goals, though I did beat my Denver marathon time from last year.

The Christian journey is certainly like a marathon. When things don’t go well, or when we lose the habit of spiritual discipline, a voice inside of us may say, “Remember, you signed up for this!” At that moment you can either regret your situation, or pray that God will help you endure another spiritual mile and realize you ARE grateful that you signed up for this journey of faith.

The 40 days of Lent offers us a marathon-type opportunity to recommit ourselves to disciplines of worship, bible study, prayer, and service. Sometimes it helps to join others on this journey.

Our Ash Wednesday worship will be at Trinity UMC in Yorkville March 5th when our choirs will combine to share special music. Perhaps you’d like to participate in my Monday night class “The Message of Jesus” that continues to Holy Week (sign up in the Gathering Room or contact the church office). Perhaps you’d be attracted to choose a 40-day devotional to do at home. Many are available online. One I can suggest is entitled “Good Enough – 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection” by Kate Bowler, or her newest one “The Hardest Part”. You can find them at www.katebowler.com

The discipline of running means I need to lace up my sneakers even when I don’t feel like it, but I almost never regret the experience of the run that follows. A discipline of Lent means you will open your bible, pause to pray, read an inspirational book, worship with others, or serve others in need . . . even when you don’t feel like it. I suspect that when you do it anyway, you won’t regret the experience.

Join us for the journey.

Peace,

Pastor
Steve



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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

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

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!



Sunday School is in need of substitute teachers. If you are able to help out when needed, please contact Ruth

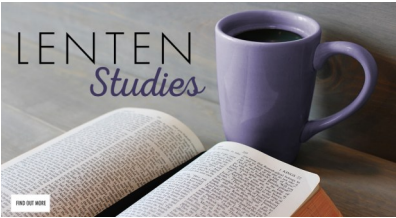
gssundayschool1@gmail.com



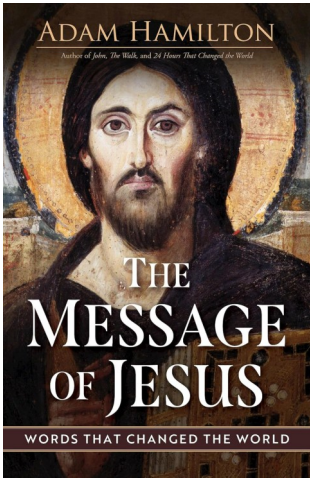
"The choir is preparing an Easter cantata and welcomes anyone who would like to sing in it. Rehearsals are Saturdays from 10-11:30 am starting on March 1st. Contact Jonathan with any questions."



TO GOOD SHEPHERD FRIENDS: "THANK YOU! Thank you for the beautiful advent basket this Christmas! It was a wonderful and special treat" ~ John Church



LENT BIBLE STUDY with Pastor Steve: *The Message of Jesus: Words that Changed the World.* Pastor Steve invites you to sign up for a 6 week class every Monday night in Lent at 7:00 pm in the Gathering Room. We will study scripture using Adam Hamilton's new curriculum: "The Message of Jesus". "We will explore six of the most important themes in Jesus' teachings, why they matter, and how they speak to us today. The book explores Jesus' preaching on the Kingdom of God, the Sermon on the Mount, the parables, the "I am" sayings in John, and more. Jesus' message is not only life-changing, but world-changing. Please purchase your own student book online (about \$15). Bring your bible to class or borrow one from the church. Please sign up in the Gathering Room (or contact the church office) and provide your email.



The class is offered Monday March 17 through Monday April 14th.

Help Decorate the Sanctuary for Our Easter Celebration!

We are taking orders for Easter lilies to beautify our church for Easter. Lilies will be available to take home after the 2nd service on Easter morning.
(Lilies will have a green foil base)



_____ # of lilies @ \$16 each. Total enclosed: \$ _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

In Celebration of _____

By _____



United Women in Faith

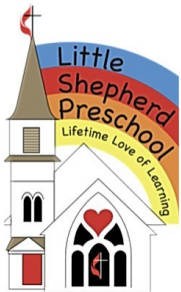
We are excited to host our first Unit Meeting of 2025 on Thursday, March 6 at 7pm. We will continue our faith journey as a community of women, surrounded by the love and support of those around us. Please consider joining us!

During the month of March, we will be collecting items for Mutual Ground. A bin will be placed in the Gathering Room with a list of the most requested items. Thank you for your continued support with our Mission work.

We have added three new books to our UWFaith library from the 2025 Reading Program: *We Are Not Here to Be Bystanders: A Memoir of Love and Resistance* by Linda Sarsour; *The Girl with the Louding Voice* by Abi Dare; and *Spiritual Practices for Soul Care: 40 Ways to Deepen Your Faith* by Barabara L. Peacock. Anyone in the church is welcome to checkout our books to read.



Join Us for Our March Brunch– Sunday, March 9th 9:30-11am in Fellowship Hall. A free will offering will be taken.



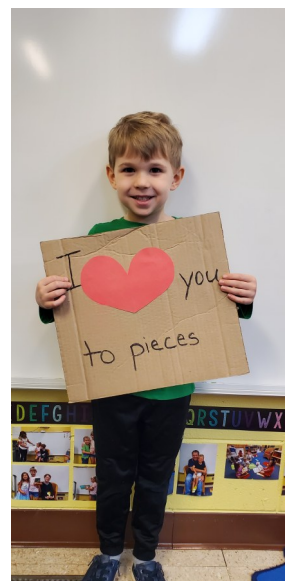
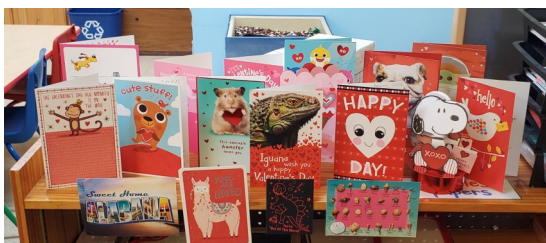
During the month of February, we learned about Fairy Tales! We studied Jack and the Beanstalk and how we felt about Jack stealing from the Giant. We also learned about The Three Bears and which materials make the best houses. We've enjoyed tons of hands-on experiences and learning opportunities.

We received almost 30 Valentines cards from all over the United States. We added hearts to our map to show where each card came from and learn a little bit about how mail travels. Thank you for all of your participation, the kids were so excited to receive

mail!

Keep an eye out for our upcoming Portillo's night and Butter Braid fundraiser!

Blessings,
Amanda Sidhu





- 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.



The United Methodist Men will be having their monthly Men's Luncheon at Ozzie's Diner, 2290 Ogden Ave, Aurora on Wednesday, March 19th at noon. Please join us for fellowship and a fine meal.

Northern Illinois Conference



2025 ANNUAL MEETING, MESSAGE, AND COMMUNION SERVICE

“EMPOWERED BY GRACE”

Saturday, March 22, 2025 - 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM

Hosted by the Lake South District at:
The United Methodist Church of New Lenox
339 West Haven Avenue, New Lenox, IL 60451

**Breakfast will be served at 8:30 AM followed by the Conference
UMMen Annual Meeting, Message, and Communion**

Officiating:

**District Superintendent Reverend Dr. Audrea Nanabray
Reverend Wesley Dickson, UMC New Lenox
Reverend Mark Meyers, UMC New Lenox**

Please RSVP the church by March 19 via email at office@umcnl.com or call (815) 485-8271 to let them know how many men from your church will be there for breakfast. Be sure to note this is for the United Methodist Men's event.

Church Website: <https://umcnl.com>

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.”

The Mission Team met via Zoom on Wednesday, February 20. The team discussed how to distribute the funds (\$2,574.62) that the Finance Committee tithed to the Mission Team from 2024 monies. The team will share with the congregation as the projects/activities are scheduled.

The Mission Team continues to serve at Hesed House. Sara Poniatowski coordinates the meals with Hesed House. As dates for the meals are scheduled, Sara will request food and assistance with serving.

The Mission Team answered an SOS from Hesed House on Thursday, January 30 to serve dinner at the adult center. Those helping to serve and clean up were Beth Hoffner, Aderonke Akiwdwd, Roland Saka, Steve Poniatowski, Jackie Herhalt and Melody Watson.



The answer is YES! We will have another Global 6k Walk/run for clean water this year. Our annual Global 6k to provide clean water to women and children around the world takes place Saturday June 7th at 9 am at Hudson Crossing Park near downtown Oswego. Come to walk, run, or crawl, or to cheer on those who will! Cowbells and other noisemakers may be provided by our sponsoring organization, World Vision. This event is perfect for inviting friends and neighbors to participate. Watch for more information that will include a link to donate to Team Good Shepherd as we help to make a

difference in our world. In the meantime, questions can be directed to Pastor Steve at 630-608-7843 or pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org

"As you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me" - Jesus. (Matthew 26:40)



Our next selection will be *Miss Morgan's Book Brigade* by Janet Charles. This book is based on the true story of librarian Jessie Carson during World War I. We will be discussing it on Tuesday, March 11 at 1:00 p.m. at Nancy Patush's home. Please join us! New members are always welcome!

Lenten Services



Please Join Us at Trinity UMC! March 5, at 7pm
at Trinity UMC, Yorkville
2505 Boomer Ln., Yorkville



Hosanna! Palm Sunday is April 13th
Join Us during Our Regular Service Times: 8:30 & 10am



Join our Youth Group as our Maundy Thursday Seder Meal
,April 17th at 7pm in Fellowship Hall. Pastor Steve will lead us
in the ceremony to commemorate the Passover when the
Hebrews escaped their slavery in Egypt, recalling also that
Christ has set us free from our slavery to sin.



This year's ecumenical Good Friday Service on April 18th will
be held at Wellspring United Methodist Church
1217 Wolf Rd, Oswego.



Come celebrate with us on Easter Sunday
at 8:30am or 10am



YOUTH UPDATE: The Attic project is complete for now. The youth spent 5 Sundays bringing items/boxes down and sorting. We got rid of things that mice had gotten too and sorted what we could. There is more space to move in the attic but we did not get to all of the stuff that is behind the studs. It will still need to be sorted.

The youth helped with brunch for Feb. and had a great time doing it. We will be offering Corned Beef and Cabbage meals for St. Patrick's day this year for a fundraiser. We will post the flyers and info this Sunday.

I'm going to help run VBS this summer. We are looking to run it early June. We will be looking for volunteers and students and put info out soon. We will be trying to use a lot of the items we unearthed in the attic from years past.

The Youth will be selling Corned Beef Dinners with soda bread for \$15 on March 16th as a fundraiser. Look for more details in the weekly publications.

Below are some cute pics of the kids cleaning attic items and helping with brunch.



March Birthdays

3/3	Emily Ogden
3/4	Tammy Mayfield
3/6	Beth Gray
3/9	Jeff Haltenhof
3/10	Isabella Zapfel
3/11	Kimberly Berlin
3/11	Marilyn Dobbin
3/11	Cheryl Todd
3/13	Kayla Miller
3/15	Harper Zapfel
3/15	Nicole Lueck
3/15	Kaitlin Ross
3/17	Janet McCarty
3/21	Connor Robinson
3/21	Scott Vlna
3/22	Gene Logston
3/22	Donna Nease
3/22	Suzi Randazzo
3/25	Abby Vlna
3/26	John Franz
3/26	Teddy Green
3/26	Roland Saka
3/27	Audrey Vlna
3/28	Nancy Patush
3/28	Tom Reinert



www.goodshepherdoswego.org

The Church of the Good Shepherd



United Methodist
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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Jessie Livingston**

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publications@goodshepherdoswego.org**

Office Email: office@goodshepherdoswego.org

**Little Shepherd Preschool:
[littleshepherdps@sbcglobal.net](mailto:little shepherdps@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

