



River Spirit

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

“The Good News”

Many of my sermons, teachings, and conversations revolve around the importance of community, of shared effort, of mutual support. The very essence of the church, the body of Christ, is about sharing our talents, our time, and our experience.

I recently became aware of an amazing community effort from a group of people who were not in the same place, but who shared the same goal. On April 12th, a man named Clark Reynolds successfully ran the Brighton Marathon on the southern coast of England. 26.2 miles is always a big accomplishment, but it means even more when applied to a visually-impaired runner. Clark has only 5% vision. Sight-challenged runners have run marathons before, but not the way Clark ran his. Rather than relying on one fellow runner next to him to shout out directions and alert him to trip hazards, Clark relied on the new Meta smart glasses and the Be My Eyes app, which allowed remote helpers who were located in various towns and cities to see what he was seeing and to speak into his headphones. For example, one of the helpers/volunteers, was in Denver Colorado, seeing through Clark's glasses in England and giving him real-time advice. Clark had used 400 volunteers to help him this way in his pre-race training block. During the actual marathon, Clark relied on a rotating crew of 1 volunteer every 30 minutes.

What a wonderful use of technology by a whole community of runners to help a fellow runner in need.

It reminds me of the creative ways we band together to reach out to others around us: online worship services, phone calls and visits to our homebound ones, prayer blankets for encouragement and special occasions, our prayer chain by email or telephone, the sharing of food for brunches, funerals, and Hesus House. And don't forget our mission assembly lines to create food or hygiene packets to distribute to those in need.

These are just a few of the ways that we creatively use the power of community to share the love of God with those around us.

God bless Clark Reynolds and his enthusiastic community of runners who became his eyes. God bless each of you as you become the eyes and ears, the hands and feet of Christ as expressions of God's love for one another.

Peace,

Pastor Steve



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

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



ONLINE GIVING: Zeffy.com which is a 100% free service for not-for-profit organizations like Good Shepherd. (You do NOT need to leave a tip- it is optional.)

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/donate-to-support-church-of-the-good-shepherd-umc>

Please contact the office if you have any issues. Thank you!



**Registration is now OPEN for our
2026-2027 school year and our popular Summer Camps!**



SUMMER MUSIC: People who are interested in performing special music during our summer services in June, July, and August for the 8:30 service? Please sign up in the Gathering Room or email the office and we can help get you signed up!



We hope to see you at the event on Saturday, May 16th. 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/teams/39947>

The registration fee is \$50 per person.

Our Global 6k walk on Sat. May 16 will begin in Oswego's Hudson Crossing Park with music by our Reborn praise band, followed by the singing of the National Anthem by Breanna DeStefano at 9 am, followed by the walk itself.



Our presence in nearly 100 countries enables us to quickly provide immediate support in all types of disasters and humanitarian crises—and we are committed to long-term support, staying to help children, families, and communities recover and rebuild. The Global 6K is great because you can do it anywhere! Walk, run, or roll 6 kilometers and be part of this global movement to change lives.

When you and thousands of others around the world walk, jog, or stroller-run your way to 6K on **May 16, 2026**, you'll empower children in need with lasting clean water. Now more than ever, clean water is essential to protect vulnerable children and families. **Will you join us?**



Longtime Good Shepherd member Dave Holdeman died at home in Plainfield at the age of 96 on April 13th. His funeral was conducted by his loving family in Naperville. He was buried with military honors at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. We thank God for brother Dave's faithful presence with us for so many years. May his family be encouraged by their resurrection faith.

<https://www.bkfh.care/obituaries/David-Lloyd-Holdeman?obId=48119459>

Former Good Shepherd pastor Phil Dripps died in Batavia at the age of 91 on April 15th. Pastor Dripps faithfully served Church of the Good Shepherd 1984-1993. His family is planning a memorial service that will take place at Baker Memorial UMC in St. Charles in the month of June. More details to come. Let us keep Pastor Phil's family in our prayers, even as we thank God for his ministry to our church family.

<https://www.yursfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/st-charles/rev-philip-m-dripps/>



United
Women
in Faith

Happy Mothers Day



Library News: There are four new books displayed in the library in the Gathering Room, waiting to be checked out by you.

All In, Living, not Dying with ALS – A Journey of Faith, written by Chris Benyo, was donated by Jackie Herhalt. This is a story of love, of survival, and running, the sport that united Chris and his

wife Denise who had ALS. An inspiring story of faith, have your Kleenex ready.

The Miracles Among Us – How God’s Grace Plays a Role in Healing was authored by Dr. Marc Siegel. Throughout this book, God’s presence is felt by those who have managed to survive against all odds, whether aided by medical science or prayer or both.

The Life-Changing Art of Self-Brain Surgery – Connecting Neuroscience and Faith to Radically Transform Your Life, by W. Lee Warren, MD. What if you have more power over how you experience life than you think – and you can learn how to change patterns that are keeping you stuck in worry, grief, depression, anxiety, or negative thinking? It’s possible and the author will show you how.

Yara the Brave and the Swirling Worry by Blair Linne. Parents, this is a book to read with your child. With lyrical storytelling, beautiful illustrations, and gentle encouragement, this book reminds kids that they can face worry with faith, hope, and the unchanging truth that God is always with them.



MAY BRUNCH: “To the women who raised us, guided us, and loved us... let’s celebrate them!”. We will be going with a vintage floral theme as we continue to celebrate and honor our mothers and the influential women in our lives.

Join us on **Sunday, May 17th** 9:15-11am for variety of finger sandwiches and quiches, along with fruit, sweet treats and more!

(We are a week later than usual this month so we can all enjoy a relaxing Mother’s Day on the 10th.) * A free will offering will be taken.



This month’s book is *Change of Heart* by Jodi Picoult. It is a story of redemption, justice and love. Please join us for our discussion at Nancy Patush’s home on Tuesday, May 19 at 1:00 p.m. Please call the church office if you need a ride.



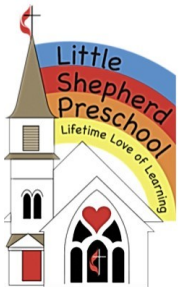
- Grab a coffee and join the UMM in person or online Fridays at 7am!
- The United Methodist Men are holding their coffee hour in person. For those who wish to attend via zoom, there will be an internet connection in the gathering room. Join us to find out what is happening with U.M.M. and the church.
- 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 Big Rock Cafe, 103 Galena St, Big Rock on Wednesday, May 20th at noon. Please join us for fellowship and a fine meal.

Craig McGregor 630-346-2239



Little Shepherd Preschool hosted a STEAM Night for family, friends, and church goers in April. We enjoyed the hands-on activities, while learning about various science elements. We released our butterflies, (which we raised from caterpillars), made working catapults, painted with bubbles, built cup phones, and explored symmetry. Mrs. Johnson performed two experiments for us – she made a Skittles rainbow and used potatoes to light up a lightbulb!



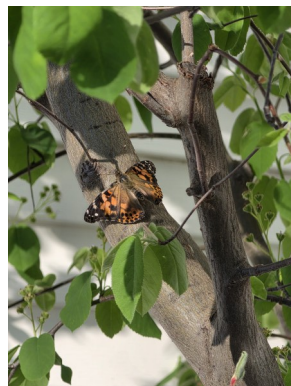
Our last day of school is rapidly approaching and we have been practicing our celebration songs. It is always hard to say goodbye to our classes, but we know that they will move on to kindergarten and do great things!

We are excited to be hosting 3 summer camps this year. Registration is open now!

Thank you all for helping make our 2025-2026 school year so memorable. We hope to see you at our family events next year!

We are looking to grow the Little Shepherd Preschool Board. If you are interested in being a member, please reach out to us at littleshepherdps@sbcglobal.com

Blessings,
Amanda Sidhu





“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.”

Hesed House – Missions is serving at the Hesed House Family Shelter on Thursday, May 14. We will be seeking folks to contribute food items or volunteering to serve the meal. Please watch the weekly email for information about the meal. Please text Sara Poniatowski (773-251-8372) or email (poniatowski@att.net) if you can help.

African American Heritage Center - In support of our US-Based Advances (UM Mission Link), Sunday, May 24 during both services, Aidan Poniatowski will present to the congregation information about the African American Heritage Center. The African American Methodist Heritage Center (AAMHC) was organized and incorporated in 2001. The African American Methodist Heritage Center provides research, preserves artifacts and other memorabilia, and protects and promotes the stories of African American people in Methodism. A special collection for AAMHC will be taken at both services on May 24.

Bishop’s Appeal – “The 2026 Bishop's Appeal is for **Education for Central Conferences**, supporting two key initiatives: a high school in Tanzania led by NIC missionary Christina Kim, and broader theological education efforts identified by the Council of Bishops. This year's appeal is not about charity; it is about justice, empowerment, and partnership. As a connectional church, we believe that every child deserves an education, and every community deserves well-trained spiritual leadership.” A special offering will be taken on Sunday, June 7 during both services.

Gently Used Bibles – In support of an ongoing mission at Midwest Mission Distribution Center, we will be collecting gently used Bibles. Many individuals and churches have Bibles that are no longer used, sitting on shelves but are still in great shape. If you are willing to donate a Bible you no longer use, you will be placing God’s Word directly into the hands of someone who deeply needs it. A designated collection bin will be in the Gathering Room. We will be collecting the Bibles through September, taking the first donations to MMDC at the annual Conference in June.



Our Library reading contest is coming to an end. Students need to have read 6 books and either drawn a picture or written a short summary in order to be entered into the gift card contest.

All entries MUST be entered by May 10th to qualify. Thank you to Janet McCarty and the library volunteers for their efforts in encouraging our students to take advantage of our extensive library. If you would like to check out books for your child, please feel free as well. You will find the children's library in the Sunday School wing.

Sunday School Students should be bringing in their change for our mission project supporting Heifer International. Our last day will be May 10th to collect so we have a total on the last day. Boxes are located in classrooms.

The last day of Sunday School is May 17th. During the 10 am service, Sunday School Students will be performing for the congregation songs they have learned this year under the direction of Barb Wood and Allison Taylor, or Pre K/K teachers. Afterwards, the students will return to class for their final lesson and an Ice Cream treat. The Junior and Senior High students will serve as Liturgists for this service as well. Please come and support our Sunday School students!



2026 VBS Registration is Open!
June 15th-18th
9:30am- noon

We welcome all kids aged 3 (and potty trained) through entering 5th grade to register as participants. 6th grade and up are encouraged to register as volunteers.

A fee of \$10 per participant due upon registration payable with cash or check. \$11 if paying online.

Register on the website for both volunteers and participants or contact the office.



Congratulations to Good Shepherd's Sebbie Poniatowski upon receiving his esteemed Eagle Scout Award at last month's Court of Honor with Troop 31. Sebbie's Eagle Scout project was to create a permanent costume storage unit for Oswego High School's Theater Department. His leadership skills were recognized at this Court of Honor. Sebbie is the younger son of proud parents Steve and Sara Poniatowski.





Easter Lily Dedications



IN MEMORY OF:

BY:

My Husband, Walt Bieritz

Gary Bornancin

Our Parents

Ellen Butkus

Harlan & June Ode

*Ferne Esping, Stanley Esping, &
Clifford & Edith Dodson*

Dick & Charlene Young

Wen Guattieri

Everett & Dodie Blake, Al Klonowski

Lydia Carpenter and Don Olson

Our Parents and Brother

Our Parents

Judy Bieritz

Denny & Janet Bornancin

Ed & Carol Bradley

Alan Butkus and family

Pat Coleman and Family

Bob & Pam Dodson

The Johnson Family

Jennifer Kaufman

Steve & Debbie Klonowski

Jan Olson

Craig & Melody Watson

Barb & Randy Wood

IN HONOR OF:

BY:

My Grandsons, Chris & Matthew Prosser

Pastor Steve Good

Janet McCarty

*Diane Baum &
Jessie Livingston*



May Birthdays

5/2	Nancy Logston
5/2	Ervin Tifrea
5/3	Linda Johnson
5/4	Kay Bonebrake
5/4	Natalie Vlna
5/10	Judy Burkhart
5/10	Tom Cross
5/10	Linda Hagan
5/11	Sebby Poniatowski
5/11	Jay Ragsdale
5/12	Brooklyn Taylor
5/13	Amy Nicholson
5/17	Gabriel Rodriguez
5/18	Karen Craig
5/20	Owen Taylor
5/21	Scott Vlna
5/22	Mary McDonald
5/23	Gemma Nicholson
5/24	Bob Dodson
5/24	Deanna Steinke
5/24	Allison Taylor
5/25	Durwood Hafenrichter
5/26	Jason Seabold
5/28	Rebecca Saffold
5/29	Aaron Green
5/29	Matthew Hartness
5/29	Ralph Smith
5/30	Megan Arison
5/30	Joel Randazzo



A Prayer of Remembrance:

God of ages past and hope to come,
we offer our gratitude for those who have gone before,
we offer our hope for those yet to come.
As we honor the past, help us dream of a future of love and peace.
Comfort us in our sorrow.
Strengthen us for the journey.
Guide us on the path of justice.
We remember with sadness those we have loved and lost.
Let us not glorify the conflicts and violence that tear our loved ones from us.
Let us, rather, give glory to God, who calls us to use our freedom peaceably.
O God, who is a God of all nations and peoples, help us to remember:
Help us to remember the sacrifices bravely made in which one has given life for another and for all...
Help us to remember those that stand in the breach where there is trouble and in which conflict threatens to undo your good creation...
Help us to remember that we look for the day when every sword will be replaced by a plow, that all may be fed and live in your peace...
And in our remembrance, help us live as your people, that others may see and remember your wisdom and truth living in us.
Forgive us every sin that makes for division and for war, and bring us all into your kingdom on earth as in heaven.
This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.



www.goodshepherdoswego.org

The Church of the Good Shepherd



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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship Service

10 a.m. Christian Education Hour

10 a.m. Contemporary Worship

Free childcare available during both services and Christian Education Hour

Pastor: Pastor Steve Good

pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org

Youth Director: Rachel Conover: jessicarc31@gmail.com

Executive Assistants: Diane Baum and Jessie Livingston

Church Office Hours: by appointment

Newsletter Editor:

publications@goodshepherdoswego.org

Office Email: office@goodshepherdoswego.org

Little Shepherd Preschool:

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

Everyone is Welcome!

- Wheelchair Accessible building
- 8:30 AM traditional and 10:00 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.

