



River Spirit

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

“The Good News”

In the chilly darkness I walked across the big wooden pedestrian bridge shared by dog walkers, cyclists, baby strollers, and runners. Strangers gave a nod or a smile to each other. Friends carried on lively conversations. Dogs barked. The only decoration were huge wooden letters facing away from the bridge on one of its sides, lit by bright light bulbs, spelling: “Peace on Earth”. Indeed, I experienced a modest but real peace on that old bridge, as I witnessed people showing kindness and respect to one another, people of all ages and many ethnicities, speaking several languages, yet co-existing in a mutual demonstration of peace on earth. I felt it as a humble but significant demonstration of God’s will for how we are to share our space and life together on God’s good earth.

Indeed, we seek to demonstrate something similar at Good Shepherd, to be the light of Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate this month. I invite you to join the assembly as we celebrate the One who, in his earthly life, experienced what it’s like to be lonely and misunderstood, to be an immigrant and an outcast, to be seen as a criminal and a threat. Come and celebrate this one who also is known as a healer, a peacemaker, a justice-promoter, and a dispenser of love and forgiveness: the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

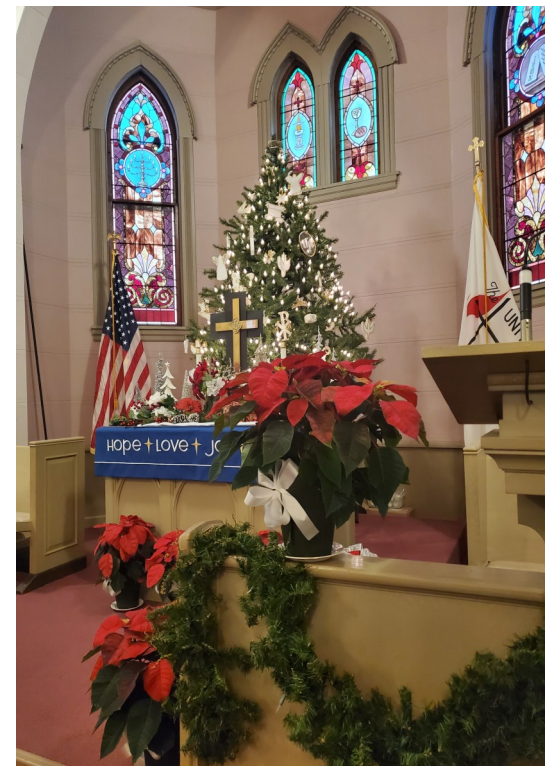
Come celebrate as we open the church to the community for our annual Nativity Scene display and Chili Supper on December 5th, as we share the Lord’s Supper on Sunday December 7 during morning worship, as the children act out their Christmas program on December

14th at 9 am, as we pursue our adult Advent study on biblical nativity stories on Monday nights, as hear our choir sing the Christmas Cantata December 21st at 8:30 am, and as we gather on Christmas Eve at 7pm and 11 pm for our candlelight worship.

Wherever we are, may we experience and demonstrate the peace on earth that Christ seeks to bring.

Merry Christmas,

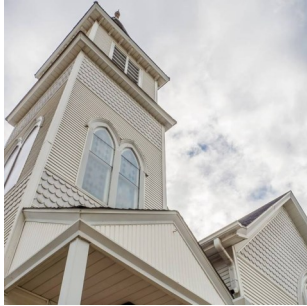
Pastor Steve



www.goodshepherdoswego.org

December 2025

From The Office:



Please call or email ahead when visiting the office.

office@goodshepherdoswego.org

Diane and Jessie continue to check voicemail and email regularly.

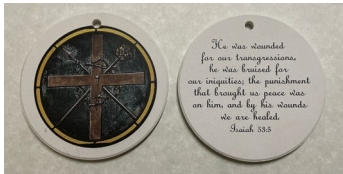
If you would like to have a zoom meeting with your group and would like us to set it up for you, or need an announcement added to our weekly or monthly news, contact Jessie at

publications@goodshepherdoswego.org (Submission deadlines are 9am

Wednesdays for the weekly publications and the 15th of the month for

the River Spirit. If you need additional time, please contact Jessie.

Pastoral Care: For joys, concerns, needs, questions, appointments, or just a chat with the Pastor, call him on his direct church cell phone [630-608-7843](tel:630-608-7843) or email him at pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org See our website for a contact list of all church committee leaders. Please note our NEW Sunday worship times: 8:30am and 10am.



The next ornament in our Good Shepherd Ornament Series has arrived!

Ornaments will be available Sunday November 30, the first day of Advent, between the 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. Church Services. Sales will be in the Gathering Room. They cost \$10 each, can be hung on a tabletop ornament

hanger, on a small display stand or as a window charm. We will also have ornaments for sale on Sunday mornings throughout the advent season. Please contact the Church office 630-554-3269 to order if you can't make it to church. Proceeds support Our Annual Fund.



BOOK CLUB: The date of the next book club meeting has been changed to Tuesday, December 16th at 1:00 p.m. at Nancy Patush's house. We will be discussing the book *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd. All readers are welcome!



The Art of Advent: Mark your calendars for Wednesday, December 10th at 6:30 pm. Good Shepherd has been invited to a special presentation, "The Art of Advent", by Christian art historian Rev. Daniel Cochran, which will take place at the Wellspring UMC, 1217 Wolf Rd in Oswego. Rev. Cochran regularly leads groups to Italy to see and study Christian works of art. Please let Pastor

Steve know if you are Interested.



Join Us for December Brunch!

Sunday, Dec. 14th 9:15-11am

A free will offering will be taken.

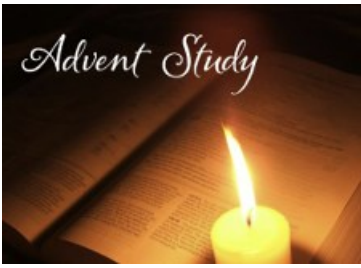
Online Giving

*Make a Secure Donation
Schedule Recurring Gifts*

GIVING: Online giving is available and is appreciated 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. ~



Pastor Steve will lead a 4-session class on Mondays at 7 pm in the Gathering Room. Participants should go online (such as Cokesbury or Amazon) to purchase the student book entitled: A Child is Born: A Beginners Guide to Nativity Stories by Amy-Jill Levine. Together we will look at the nativity scenes in the bible, focusing on "the people and angels who came before Jesus, yet lived into his story in profound ways". You will see yourself in these characters and their unlikely stories as we explore the themes of birth and rejoicing. The Monday evening classes will be Dec. 1, 8, 15, and 22.

Please sign up in the Gathering Room or by contacting the church office (630) 554-3269

Poinsettia Orders!

Help decorate our sanctuary and dedicate a poinsettia.
Our regular poinsettia order for \$15 and you may pick up your poinsettia after Christmas Eve services. We will have the dedication list in the bulletin on Christmas Eve. Orders may be mailed to the church ,sent electronically or dropped off by December 15th.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER

Name _____

In Honor Of _____

In Memory Of _____

In Celebration Of _____

\$15 Attached ☐

Please return orders and payment to the Church of the Good Shepherd, UMC, PO Box 695, Oswego, IL 60543-0695, or place in the box provided in the Gathering Room by Sunday, December 15th Thank you!



SUNDAY SCHOOL FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS NEEDED

Can you help us help others in need? Food items and small personal items are in great need for our pantry. Please consider donating the following items:

- Can goods – fruits, vegetables, soup, meats
- Instant food pouches – rice, pasta, potatoes
- Cereal and Oatmeal cups – single serve
- Misc pantry supplies – peanut butter, jelly, small mayo, mustard, spices
- Any other items YOU can contribute will also be appreciated!

Sunday School Christmas Program!
The Sunday School Christmas Program will be held on Dec 14th In between the first and second service.





Youth Group Christmas Party Dec. 14th 2pm- 6pm

We will be hosting our annual Christmas party at the church this year.

Family Groups and friends are welcome to attend. We will have food, crafts and fun.

The praise band will help out with singing some Christmas favorites. Wear your favorite Christmas Sweater

Sunday Meetings 11:30 pm -12:30 pm

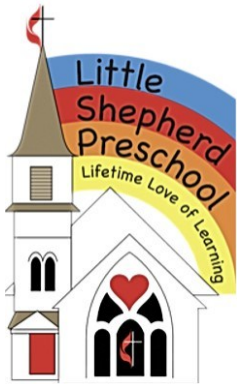
Our family friendly youth meeting day, different age groups are welcome to attend and join in a relaxed and fun meeting with games and projects.

Wednesday Meetings 5:30 pm -6:30 pm

This is our Bible Study focused group for our youth that are middle school and high school age.

We are focusing on the life of John the Baptist and his ministry this fall.

You can access the resources we are using with this slide link [Discovering John the Baptist](#)



Little Shepherd Preschool hosted our annual Thanksgiving Potluck in November. We were treated to a variety of family favorites, including collard greens, mac & cheese, chicken pot pie, cornbread casserole and more! We treasure this time to get to know each other a little better.

This month we are looking forward to our Christmas Program! All of our Little Shepherds have been practicing songs and can't wait to perform for our families.

Enrollment for next year opens in January. Church members get first pick! Keep an eye out for more information.

Blessings,
Amanda Sidhu



You're invited to a
Portillo's®
FUNDRAISER



Eat Portillo's and give back.

Come join us!

Keep 20% of the Proceeds

Join us at Portillo's for a fundraiser to support:

Little Shepherd Preschool

When:

December 2, 2025

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

at the Portillo's located at:

2810 US Highway 34

Oswego, IL

20% of sales will benefit your organization. Order online or in app for pickup using code **PORTILLOS24** before checkout in the "Coupon Code" field, or show this flyer or a digital version to cashier when ordering at the restaurant. Valid on drive thru, pickup, kiosk, and in restaurant orders.

Portillo's
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portillos.com/community

For online/app orders to qualify for the fundraiser, orders must be placed for pickup only, from the participating restaurant, on the fundraiser date and during the listed fundraiser hours. Gift card purchases, delivery orders, and orders placed on the third party websites are excluded from the fundraiser. Online ordering subject to availability. \$200 minimum fundraising sales required for the organization to



United
Women
in Faith

Merry Christmas!



The United Women in Faith want to thank everyone for their generous donations for the Kendall County Community Food Pantry. The donations overflowed and demonstrated your love and care for our community in need. At our last meeting, the UWFaith donated \$2,000 to 11 Mission organizations both local and abroad. These funds were raised with the congregation's support of our Chili Supper last year and our burrito fundraiser, as well as offerings collected from our women throughout the year.

Speaking of Chili Supper, we hope many members, friends, and the community will eat lots of chili, hot dogs, homemade pies and baked potatoes during the Christmas Walk on Dec. 5th. Your support with homemade pies, helping hands, and empty stomachs is much appreciated.

**Church of the
Good Shepherd**
5 W Washington, Oswego
Christmas Walk
Friday, Dec 5th

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**Chili, Baked Potato
& Pie Supper**
4:30-7:30

with chili dogs, baked potatoes, chips, homemade pie,
brownies, cookies and beverages
Proceeds go to United Women in Faith mission projects

Nativity Scene Show
5:00-8:00

Nativity scenes of all sizes & types
displayed in our historic sanctuary.
Music by Fox River Music Academy.



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★
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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 dinner to approximately 25 guests at the Hesed House Family Shelter on Saturday, November 15. Guests enjoyed chicken nuggets, mac & cheese, corn, biscuits, cupcakes, and lemonade. This dinner was generously provided by Craig and Melody Watson, Becca Johnson, Judy Burkard, Ruth Frey, and Sara and Steve Poniatowski. Thanks for preparing a wonderful meal!



Thank you also to Melody and Craig Watson, Becca Johnson, Roland Saka and Steve and Sara Poniatowski for serving the meal. Guests came back for seconds and thirds, and there were even some biscuits left over to enjoy a biscuits and gravy breakfast on Sunday!

We are grateful to the Good Shepherd congregation for your unwavering commitment to this mission. We will serve again on Monday, December 15.

We will be serving at the Hesed House Family Shelter on Monday, Dec 15. We will be serving some delicious Fall comfort foods to about 30-35 guests! We are seeking folks to contribute in any way possible Please text

(773-251-8372) or email (poniatowski@att.net) if you can help with any of the items listed:

- Garden salad,
- Garlic bread,
- Parmesan cheese,
- Croutons
- Salad dressings (Italian, ranch),
- Dessert,
- lemonade powdered drink mix and
- 3-4 people to serve the meal.

Thank you!



- 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 Olive Garden, 2620 US34 Oswego on Wednesday, December 17th at noon. Please join us for fellowship and a fine meal.



This year's Christmas Cantata will be Sunday, December 21 at the 8:30 Worship service.



**7pm for contemporary
and 11 pm for traditional services
on Christmas Eve for our Candlelight Services.**

Our online Christmas Eve service will be available all day on our website, Facebook page and YouTube channel.



Advent Letter 2025

Church of the Good Shepherd, UMC

Rev. Steve Good

I admit that I have a tough time adjusting to the increasing days of darkness, when the sun seems to set with a suddenness that always surprises me and causes me to long for those longer daylight hours. It's a season that reminds many of loss rather than gain, bringing to mind what we once had and no longer experience. I believe this is one reason the approach to Christmas is harder on some than on others.

As the darkness steadily increases and the light decreases, the calendar moves ever close to the shortest day of the year, the winter equinox on December 21st. It's an important seasonal day that pivots us from increasing darkness to increasing light. Spiritually, it fits perfectly with the coming of Jesus, the light of the world whose birth we celebrate at Christmas. John the Baptist said of Jesus "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30)

As we move toward Christmas, may we anticipate the increase not only of daylight, but of Christ's influential increase in our lives.

In this time, I invite you to put yourselves in places where you can experience Christ's influence, as we gather at Good Shepherd for meaningful worship, beautiful music, a delicious chili supper, meditation around nativity scenes in the sanctuary, learning with others during Advent bible study, compassionate service to others and joyful fellowship.

As an expression of your thanksgiving for the Light of the World, God's increasing presence in your life, you may send your Advent/Christmas offering to the church in-person, by mail, or by e-giving. Consider also a gift of love to the Salvation Army, which you can separately designate.

God bless you as you navigate the darkness while anticipating the light of Christ's healing and saving presence.

Merry Christmas,

Pastor Steve



Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Minds

"Earn all you can, Save all you can, Give all you can." John Wesley

December Birthdays

12/1	John Eggenberger
12/1	Rick Kayer
12/3	Christine Martin
12/4	John Momich
12/5	Rachel Conover
12/5	Don Snyder
12/7	Sherry Gilloffo
12/8	Phyllis Wood
12/9	Craig Logston
12/10	Phyllis Wagner
12/12	Karen Grossman
12/13	Donna Mason
12/13	Diana Mewmaw
12/15	Lucretia Saka
12/18	Bob Baker
12/19	Trent Roberts
12/22	Margaret Wackerlin
12/23	Carol Dodd
12/28	Nick Randazzo



www.goodshepherdoswego.org

The Church of the Good Shepherd



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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Everyone is Welcome!

- Wheelchair Accessible building
- 8:30AM 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.



Pastor: Pastor Steve Good

pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org

Youth Director: Rachel Conover: jessicarc31@gmail.com

Executive Assistants: Diane Baum and
Jessie Livingston

Church Office Hours: Tues, Thurs, and Friday 10am-3pm
by appointment

Newsletter Editor:
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