# River Spirit

## Church of the Good Shepherd

UNITED METHODIST

FAITH • FAMILY • SERVICE

DECEMBER 2026 | VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2




*"The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing."*

PSALM 23:1

# A Message from The Pastor

## Play Doh!

Dear Friends,

The Church Conference concluded beautifully. I want to thank Diane, the Lay Leadership Committee, and the leaders of each committee for all their hard work in preparing for it. Having arrived only a month ago, I found the meeting a valuable opportunity to learn about our church. One thing is certain: ours is a truly "living" congregation, a rarity in this day and age. For those who could not attend, here is a brief recap of the reflections I shared.

When I first met my predecessor, Steve, he asked how to pronounce my name. I suggested he simply call me "Pastor Doh," like the "Doh" in Play-Doh. He must have enjoyed that, because he left a set of Play-Doh in the office as a welcome gift. Every time I see it, I find myself wondering what spiritual insight it might hold, perhaps a message for both me and our church. I see three.



**First, *Play-Doh is colorful.*** It isn't limited to a single hue but comes in a wide spectrum of colors. I am the first pastor of color in the history of this church, and over the past two decades Oswego has grown rapidly into a diverse, multiethnic community. I see my appointment as a message from God, a call for our ministry to embrace that diversity as the times change.



**Second, *Play-Doh is flexible.*** Soft and pliable, it can be squashed, rolled, flattened, poked, and reshaped into something new at any moment. It reminds us not to cling rigidly to the way things have always been done. We love and cherish our traditions, and they are valuable legacies, yet our church must keep evolving alongside a changing world. We are called to stay ready for transformation, shaped anew by God like clay in the potter's hands.



**Third, *Play-Doh is a toy,*** a form of play that everyone can enjoy, from the very young to the young at heart. I hope our church becomes a playground for people of all ages. I wish for every church activity, whether worship, Bible study, or service, to be experienced as play rather than obligation. Serving God without joy becomes nothing more than arduous labor. Jesus invited all who are weary and burdened to come to him and find rest. May our church be a place of joy, where we set down the heavy burdens of the world, find rest, share a meal, and enjoy one another's company.

Blessings,

*Pastor Eunbae Doh*

## Important Dates

| | |
|---|---|
| **Dec. 3** | Pastor's Advent Study Begins |
| **Dec. 4** | Chili & Pie Supper and Nativity Display (Oswego Christmas Walk) |
| **Dec. 5** | Downtown Cookie Walk |
| **Dec. 6** | Second Sunday of Advent |
| **Dec. 13** | Third Sunday of Advent Fellowship Brunch |
| **Dec. 20** | Fourth Sunday of Advent |
| **Dec. 24** | Christmas Eve Services 7:00 pm & 11:00 pm |
| **Dec. 25** | Christmas Day |



*All are welcome!*

# News from the Church Office

## Office Hours

Tues, Thurs, Fri
10:00 am – 3:00 pm
and by appointment

***The office will be closed December 24 and 25.***

## Contact Information

**Email:**
office@goodshepherdoswego.org

**Phone:**
630-554-3269

**Address:**
PO Box 695
5 W. Washington St.
Oswego, IL 60543

## We're Here for You!

The church office is here to help with questions, announcements, facility requests, and more. Please feel free to call, stop in during office hours, or send us an email.




## Reminders

Submit information for the newsletter by the **15th of the month.**

Let us know of any address, phone, or email changes.

If you have a meeting or event to be added to the church calendar, please contact the office.

**If you have not yet submitted your 2027 Estimate of Giving,** please email or mail it to the office. Contact Diane with any questions.

We are always happy to help! Don't hesitate to reach out.

## Stay Connected

Visit our website (for updates, events, and more)
goodshepherdoswego.org

Follow us on Facebook (for news and photos)

*Thank you for being part of our church family!*

The Church of The Good Shepherd
United Methodist Church
Oswego, IL

# Christian Education & Faith Formation

## Children's Ministry



### Wisdom and Wonder
#### Mentorship of Sunday School Students

We are looking for adults, especially from the 8:30am service, who would be willing to mentor our Sunday School students by participating in a classroom once a month, usually on the 3rd week of the month.

- Join a team to read a Bible story, do a craft, or speak to our Sunday School—sharing your faith and building relationships.
- Encourage our Sunday School students and youth to be involved in our church family.

**Program begins in January!**

**Safe Sanctuary certification required.**

To sign up or for more information, email Ruth Frey at gssundayschool1@gmail.com.

## Youth Ministry



### Growing in Faith Through Service

The youth would like to thank Bob LeClerq and Gail Ford for giving them the opportunity to help with a Fall leaf clean-up! We greatly appreciate their generosity and donations. It was a wonderful opportunity for the youth to spend time outdoors, learn new skills, and experience the blessing of working together across generations.

**Sunday School**
Sundays at 10:00am

**Youth Group**
Sundays at 11:30am

**Wednesday Night Bible Study**
at 6:30pm

### Annual Youth Group Christmas Open House

**Friday, December 11 | 5:00 – 8:00pm**

Open to our Youth, Sunday School, and Preschool Families!

Games ❄ Cookie Decorating ❄ Card & Ornament Making
Gingerbread House Building Competition

Pizza will be provided for the kids. Adults are welcome to bring a dish to share.
Parents can stay and join in the fun or drop off the kiddos while you do some holiday shopping.

*This is a free event, but donations to benefit our Youth and Preschool programs are greatly appreciated!*

## Adult Education

### Bible Between Bytes



**Wednesdays at 10:00am on Zoom**

### Pastor's Advent Study
### "Light from Afar"

*An Advent Devotional from Around the World*

**Beginning Thursday, December 3**

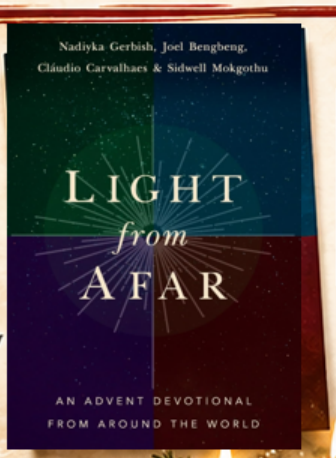
**Thursdays during Advent at 7:00pm**

***Join us in person or on Zoom.***

Discover how Advent is celebrated around the world. Journey through this Advent season with inspiring stories and daily reflections from four international authors:

- Nadiyka Gerbish — Ukraine
- Joel Bengbeng — Philippines
- Cláudio Carvalhaes — Brazil
- Sidwell Mokgothu — South Africa

Each day's meditation includes a scripture reading, a prayer, and a link to a song from the author's home country.




Scan Here to Sign Up!

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# Missions Team

## Our Mission & Purpose

*"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** – We are looking forward to again serving at Hesed House, as their renovations are near completion. When we have dates to serve scheduled, Sara Poniatowski will be providing information and asking for food donations and volunteers.




## Spotlight on Grace Children's Hospital in Haiti

*(We support Grace Children's Hospital through monetary donations which align with Mission Links – Global Advance Projects.)*

### An Update on GCH and How Your Donation Helps

Even while the situation in Haiti continues to be difficult, Grace Children's Hospital is still open. Your donations help ensure services can continue and the hospital can stay operational, especially as many hospitals in Port-au-Prince, Haiti have closed.

***Some services that Grace Children's Hospital has been providing in recent months:***

- **Lab Tests**
- **Eye Clinic**
- **HIV Treatments**
- **TB Treatments**
- **Prenatal Care**

***In short, without your donations, many children and families would not have access to these life-changing treatments. Every dollar counts.***

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# United Women in Faith

## Share Your Blessings & Angel Tree

Thank you to everyone who picked up a Share Your Blessings and/or Angel Tree gift tag.



***Please return the unwrapped gift to church by November 29.***

*If you have any challenges or questions, please contact* Shar Momich at 630-567-4994 or sharmomich@gmail.com.

## Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who brought items for the Kendall County Community Food Pantry.
***Your donations help our neighbors in need.***



Through your support of our fundraisers and our members' offertory contributions throughout the year, we were able to donate

**$2,000**

to a variety of charitable organizations both locally and abroad.

***What a blessing!***

*The Lord is glorified through our giving.*

Church of The Good Shepherd

## Annual Chili & Pie Supper

**during The Oswego Christmas Walk**

**Friday, Dec, 4th • 4:30–7:30pm**

Chili, Hot Dogs/Chili Dogs, Baked Potatoes, Chips, Homemade Pies (The Best in Town), Brownies, and Beverages

### Your Help is Needed!

United Women in Faith is excitedly planning for the Chili, Pie and Baked Potato Bar dinner.

*Bakers* | *Servers* | *Donations for food expenses*

***A sign-up sheet is located in the Gathering Room.***

*Proceeds will go to The United Women in Faith Mission Projects.*

## Nativity Display



### NATIVITY DISPLAY:

We are excited to announce that the Nativity Scene Display is back this year for the Oswego Christmas Walk on ***Friday, December 4.***

As you unpack your Christmas decorations, consider letting us use your Nativity for our display in the santuary. We take special care with your sets.

***A signup sheet and dates for drop off will be located in the Gathering Room.***

Please label your boxes and nativity with your name and phone. Any questions, call Pam at 630-534-1203.

## Upcoming Date



### *Christmas Sing-along*

***Featuring the Oswego Senior Singers***

**Thursday, Dec. 10th at 7:00pm**

Fellowship Hall

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# United Methodist Men

## Congratulations, Ed Bradley!

### 2026 UMM Man of the Year

The United Methodist Men and the Church of the Good Shepherd would like to congratulate

**Ed Bradley**

as the 2026 UMM Man of the Year!



### Thank You!

I was surprised, humbled, and very honored on Sunday November 22 when I was awarded the UMM Man of the Year Award for 2026 along with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Church for my work as Finance and Stewardship Chairman.

Thanks to all of you in our church family for providing your support in so many different ways for everything that has been accomplished. I am blessed to be a part of such a wonderful church family,

*Ed Bradley*

## December Luncheon

**Wednesday, December 16 at Noon**

**Yolkville Cafe**
102 Stagecoach Trail
Yorkville, IL

*Join us for food, fellowship, and conversation!*



## Friday Morning Fellowship

*Grab a cup of coffee and join the Good Shepherd UMM online on ZOOM!*

**Fridays at 7:00am**




If you desire to meet in person, contact Craig Mc Gregor at 630-346-2239 (c) or email him at craigscottmcgregor@gmail.com. He will set up an internet connection in the church Gathering Room.

## Kendall County Community Food Pantry




*We are always looking for people interested in helping with the UMM stocking Of the Kendall County Community Food Pantry on Wednesday evenings at 5pm.*

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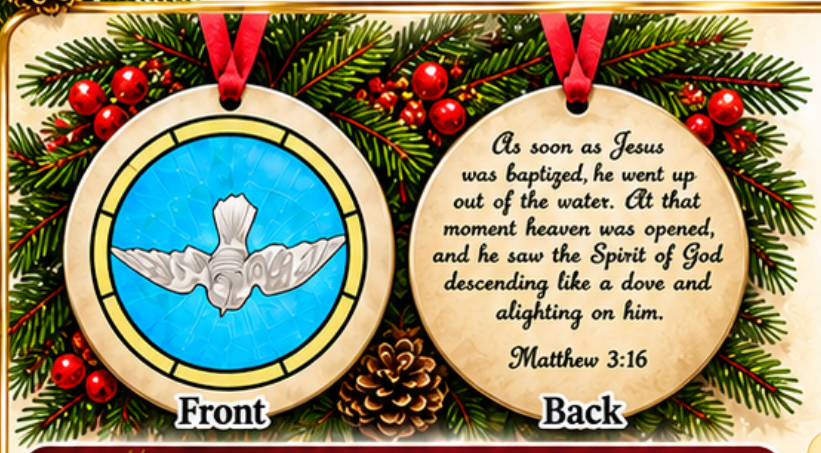
# Additional Announcements & Upcoming Opportunities

## Church Ornaments




The 2026 ornament has been designed, as in the past, by Church member Tracy Johnson. The dove, on the front of the ornament, is a rendering of the descending dove at the top of the window given in memory of C. Ferdinand Shoger, by his wife Minnie Shoger. According to "The Stories of the Windows" written by The Church of the Good Shepherd History Co., the dove symbolizes purity, peace and serves as a messenger of God's will.

The reverse side of the ornament displays Scripture, Matthew 3:16.

This year's ornaments are **$13.00 each.**

A limited amount of previous years' ornaments will also be available for purchase for **$10.00 each.**

**We anticipate the ornaments to be available for purchase from the church office and Sunday mornings between services in the Gathering Room.**

*Proceeds from ornament sales support the General Fund.*

## Poinsettia Sale

***Help decorate our sanctuary and dedicate a poinsettia!***



Poinsettias are $15 each and may be picked up after Christmas Eve services. The dedication list will appear in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

**Orders may be mailed to the church, sent electronically, or dropped off by Tuesday, December 15, 2026.**

### 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 **Tuesday, December 15, 2026.**



## Christmas Fellowship Brunch

**Sunday, December 13, 2026**

**9:15 – 10:30am**

*Join us for a delicious brunch and Christmas cheer!*

### Menu:

- Ham
- Hashbrown Potatoes
- Corn Casserole
- Biscuits
- Fruit

*A free will offering will be taken.*

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# December Birthdays

## 90th Birthday

## Happy 90th Birthday, Carol Dodd!

*Celebrating 90 Wonderful Years!*

The Church of the Good Shepherd church family extends our warmest wishes to Carol Dodd as she celebrates her very special 90th birthday!

*May your birthday be filled with love, laughter, cherished memories, and the joy of God's abundant blessings.*



## December Birthdays

| | |
|---|---|
| Dec. 1 | John Eggenberger |
| Dec. 1 | Rick Kayer |
| Dec. 3 | Christine Martin |
| Dec. 4 | John Momich |
| Dec. 5 | Rachel Conover |
| Dec. 5 | Don Snyder |
| Dec. 7 | Sherry Gilloffo |
| Dec. 8 | Phyllis Wood |
| Dec. 9 | Craig Logston |
| Dec. 10 | Phyllis Wagner |
| Dec. 12 | Karen Grossman |
| Dec. 13 | Donna Mason |
| Dec. 13 | Diana Mewmaw |
| Dec. 15 | Lucrettia Saka |
| Dec. 18 | Bob Baker |
| Dec. 19 | Trent Roberts |
| Dec. 22 | Margaret Wackerlin |
| **Dec. 23** | **Carol Dodd – *90th Birthday!*** |

*May God bless each of you with a wonderful birthday, a joyful Christmas season, and a year filled with love, happiness, and abundant blessings.*



# The Church of The Good Shepherd
United Methodist Church
Oswego, IL

# Church Information & Staff Directory

## Contact Information

**Church of the Good Shepherd, UMC**
**5 W. Washington St.**
**PO Box 695**
**Oswego, IL 60543**

***Sunday Worship:***
**8:30am & 10:00am**

***Phone:*** **630-554-3269**

***Email:***
office@goodshepherdoswego.org

***Website:***
**goodshepherdoswego.org**

***Office Hours:***
Tuesday, Thursday and Friday,
10am – 3pm,
and by appointment.

## Church Staff Directory

| | |
|---|---|
| **Pastor:** | **Rev. Eunbae Doh**<br>pastor@goodshepherdoswego.org |
| **Youth Director:** | **Rachel Conover**<br>jessicarc31@gmail.com |
| **Executive Assistants:** | **Diane Baum**, Treasurer and<br>**Jessie Livingston**, Publications Editor<br>publications@goodshepherdoswego.org |
| **Choir Director:** | **Jonathan Tatar** |
| **Organist & Handbell Choir Director:** | **Cheryl Todd** |
| **Pianist:** | **Sue Gilla** |
| **Praise Band Director:** | **Jon Conover** |
| **Custodian:** | **Bonnie Kennedy** |

## Little Shepherd Preschool



**Office:** hello@littleshepherdps.com
**Acting Director:** Rachel Conover
**Teachers:** Jessica Exline & Tracy Johnson
**Teacher's Aide:** Vincenza Ferguson




# Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

## Thursday, December 24

## 7:00pm & 11:00pm

## All are welcome!

*May the peace of Christ, the joy of Christmas,*
*and the hope of a blessed New Year*
*fill your hearts and homes.*

***Merry Christmas from your***
***Good Shepherd Church Family!***