



*Shepherd's Staff*

## PUMPKIN PATCH

October 16-31st at Good Shepherd



Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

October 2025



**Josh Brecht**

**Lead Pastor**

**Eyes of Jesus**

It has been a hard month. While we were still reeling from the horrific school shooting at Annunciation in Minneapolis, we witnessed the public murder of Charlie Kirk. Both of these acts break my heart, and just two days after I wrote this article, we weep again with the people of Grand Blanc, MI. These acts kick our collective emotions into overdrive. Before we know the full story, the temptation to blame and call names takes off like digital wildfire. Before we have time to shed tears and sit in our grief, we're expected to tribe up and take sides.

At Good Shepherd we have started a journey of learning to lead like Jesus this fall. When my grief and fear overwhelm me lately, I find myself turning to the Gospels. How did Jesus deal with tragedy? How did he lead through times of collective trauma? Or grief? Or division?

I imagine Jesus teaching a weary, fearful group of peasants. I see him spending time with the poor, the sick and the desperate in that opening sermon on the Mount. I can see the tears of a widow when Jesus looks her direction and says, "blessed are those who mourn." I can see the hopeful tears of a mother when Jesus looks at her hungry child and says, "blessed are the poor in spirit." I can see the families of the disappeared engage when Jesus says blessed are those who hunger and thirst for

righteousness. When he finally reaches the oratory crescendo and says, "love your enemies" I can hear the slow murmur, "but what about the Romans? What about those Samaritans? What about those gentiles?" Jesus just repeats, "love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you. "For Jesus, leadership, *discipleship*, is never just words: it's actions. After this beautiful, yet challenging sermon just look at what he does next.

He goes to a Roman Centurion. The enemy. The one representing everything he was supposed to hate. He heals his servant. He hears his faith and lifts him up as an example. He goes to a Leper, an untouchable. One despised and separated and declared unclean. Doesn't just heal him but *touches* him. He goes out of his way to cross the sea and find demon possessed gentiles and give them a new life, spiritual freedom.

This isn't what Jesus did in the good times. This all took place in the *worst* times. Rome was brutally oppressing the Jews. John had been silenced by imprisonment (and later execution). Jesus' own people were fiercely divided by the timeless playbook of the power-hungry; Divide and Conquer. Even the Jewish religious leaders accusing Jesus of ludicrous offenses like blasphemy or even being demon-possessed! It's in these worst of times that Jesus leads with love, especially love for enemies. It's the only way to break the spell of retribution. It's the only way to disarm the spirit of vengeance.

Maybe the balm for the deep ache in our hearts is to look at the world with the eyes of Jesus. The eyes of Jesus never see enemies to defeat, only neighbors to love. Maybe the cure for the sickness in our souls is to turn off the news and the noise and turn on our curiosity a compassion toward the people across the street. Maybe the way to dissolve this fear in my chest is crossing the imaginary lines others have drawn between you and me. Maybe when we refuse to bow to the cultural narrative of "my neighbor is my enemy," and begin to see our neighbor is our brother, reconciliation can finally begin.

When we follow the way of Jesus and see with his eyes we experience something remarkable. When we live, lead, and love like Jesus we begin to heal the world, but we also find that our own souls have been healed along the way.

May we see with the eyes of Jesus, that we might lead like him to build up peace and healing for the world.

In hope,

## **A Thank You From Tom Schoenherr**

Thank you for your thoughtfulness in extending to me the title of "Pastor Emeritus". It was a great day for Barb and me with many people sharing greetings and remembrances with us.

The gifts of the framed Church Council resolutions and the

crystal piece are very special to us and will have a special place in our home. We will be reminded constantly of your kindness and generosity in honoring us in this way.

We treasure Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and all you have meant and still mean to us. This congregation has always been a beacon to many other congregations of the mission of Christ in the world; a mission of welcome and service to others.

We thank Robin Seuc for providing refreshments after the 5:00 service on Saturday, and Annette Molitor for the cakes on Sunday morning after each service. We are grateful for the community of people who make up our congregation, for the pastors and the staff, and for the Church Council and the leadership of Good Shepherd.

God bless you all and the ministry that we share in proclaiming and living the Good news of Jesus Christ, our hope and promise for life, now and forever.

Yours in Christ,  
Thomas Schoenherr



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## **Welcome To Our Newest Part-Time Staff Member Karen Roche!**

Karen is a St. Louis native, Lutheran High South (1973) graduate and classmate of Good Shepherd's organist, Keith Kolander. She



accompanied operettas throughout grade school and was the concert pianist at age 16 with the Afton Summer Symphony

performing “Rhapsody in Blue”. She studied organ and served as worship organist at her home church, Webster Gardens Lutheran.

Karen attended UMKC Conservatory of Music for piano performance and was a church Music Director, organist and pianist throughout her career. A highlight of her career was when she performed as the concert pianist for the National Festival Chorus, John Leavitt director, in June 2010, at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Now retired from full time church music ministry, she continues to serve as assistant organist and pianist at Zion Lutheran in Harvester and after filling in here for the summer has recently accepted the part-time positions of Special Music Accompanist and Saturday Worship Accompanist at Good Shepherd. You will see her accompanying our four choirs and the Christmas Cantata, playing piano at the 5pm worship service and occasionally filling in on organ at the 9am service.

Karen has four grown children and five grandchildren. In her spare time, she is an avid cyclist and loves to play golf. She still teaches private piano lessons and arranges music and directs senior choirs at two Independent Living Communities.

We are thankful to have Karen as a member of the Music Staff and welcome her to Good Shepherd!

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## **The Sale of the Property Sale at 9 Hedgewood Lane**

**by: Mike Kelley, Facilities Management  
and Planning Committee (FMPC) Chair**

In June, at the congregational meeting, FMPC was given the responsibility and authority to sell the house and property adjacent to Good Shepherd at 9 Hedgewood Lane. The church had owned the



property for about 17 years, and the FMPC managed its rental throughout that time. After many hours of volunteer time, sweat equity, and the help of outside contractors, the sale was successfully finalized on August 5, 2025.

When we began this project in early June, the house (built in the 1950s) looked tired. The transformation was remarkable. In just a few weeks, a dedicated team worked to accomplish a myriad of jobs, both large and small. The work included:

- A full interior and exterior power washing and fresh painting
- New roof, lights, and updated electrical outlets
- New carpeting, trim, and kitchen sink
- Polished hardwood floors
- Landscaping, tree trimming, and yard cleanup
- Window washing and screen repair/replacement
- New doors and hardware

The house was sparkling and attractive and, as a result, was put under contract just one week after listing.

This article serves not only to report our success to the congregation but also to extend a heartfelt thank you to all who contributed so freely to accomplishing this sale. These include Gene and Dianne Unverfehrt, Diane and Roger Cannon, Lanny and Jenny Schnipper, Pat Guichet, Julie Deay, Tom Webb, Greg Mueller, Kevin Nichols, and Maggie and Josh DeLunas. Every single one stepped up when needed and brought enthusiasm and expertise to the project. The movement of the Holy Spirit and how exactly that works has always been mysterious to me, but I have no other way to explain how this group pulled together and got this done so quickly.

As a result of the sale, Good Shepherd netted just over \$301,000 after all improvement costs and fees. This money will be entirely applied toward the estimated \$600,000 in upkeep and improvement costs that we anticipate for the Good Shepherd building and grounds over the next 4-5 years. For example, we are currently pricing HVAC equipment to enable heating the Fireside Room, where the heat exchanger has cracked and is no longer repairable.

We look forward to optimizing this money to keep Good Shepherd clean, attractive, safe, and up to date, allowing us to continue our vital ministry and create a welcoming space for God's work to flourish.

Respectfully,

Michael Kelley and the FMPC Team





**Kathy Rebholz**

**Director of Building Blocks Preschool**

The 2025-2026 ministry of Building Blocks Preschool is in full swing! Our preschoolers have enjoyed organic classroom play, music class, our science room, and chapel time with Pastor Amy. While the start of the school year is always exciting, a recent highlight was an on-site field trip to *Good Shepherd's Mission Garden* hosted by Laura and Jim McCommis, and Sandi Bahr.



Their introductory lessons taught our students about fruits, vegetables, gardening, and honeybees. This experience sparked our students' interest so much, our teachers took the lessons back to the classrooms where they read books about gardens and tasted pickled okra as well as honey! In addition, an important take away was growing food to donate to people in need. To help with this cause, our preschoolers donated canned goods to Circle of Concern.

As director of Building Blocks Preschool, it is special when Good Shepherd's ministries intersect to serve dual purposes. Thank you to Good Shepherd's Mission Garden ministry team as they serve our wider community while teaching valuable lessons to curious minds at the same time!





# Good Shepherd

LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

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