



*Shepherd's Staff*

# GIFTED

DISCOVER  
DISCERN  
DEPLOY

*BY THE SPIRIT*

The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

August 2026



**Josh Brecht**  
**Lead Pastor**

## **GIFTED**

### **Discover. Discern. Deploy.**

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul teaches about spiritual gifts. At first, this sounds like a simple concept, but there is so much more to it! Beginning **August 30**, Good Shepherd will dive into a six-week sermon series: **Gifted by the Spirit**.

Have you ever asked these questions?

- What *are* spiritual gifts?
- What is the difference between *spiritual gifts* and the things I happen to be good at?
- How do I discover *my* spiritual gifts?
- How is God calling me to use them?

Over the course of six-weeks we are going on a deep dive into scripture to learn what spiritual gifts are specifically named in the Bible. Some of these gifts are quiet and may feel natural to us. Some are more supernatural and may feel a bit overwhelming! That's ok.

As I read about these remarkable gifts, I find myself asking many questions. Wondering about why God has given me some gifts, but not others. Why some gifts that seemed prevalent in New Testament times seem less prevalent today.

Spiritual gifts are more than just talent; these are purposeful gifts **God has given you** through the power of the Holy Spirit. Every baptized follower of Jesus has been given spiritual gifts; gifts for a purpose. **You** have been given gifts for a purpose!

There is joy in discovering these special, spiritual gifts that God has uniquely given you. God has given each and every one of us different gifts. Life is more fulfilling, exciting, and beautiful when we understand these gifts and deploy them to bear fruit for the kingdom of heaven. When we understand and value these different and varied gifts and then discern how God wants us to use them *together*, amazing ministry happens.

### ***Imagine...***

- If every person at Good Shepherd truly understood the gifts God has given them?
- If each of us discovered how God is calling us to use these gifts right now?
- If we started to seek kingdom fruit grow because we are deploying and developing these gifts together?
- If we began to live more in a way that reflects the kingdom of heaven: where every gift is essential, every person is beloved and belongs?

God has given you spiritual gifts. We want to help you **discover**, **discern**, and **deploy** them. God has a plan and purpose for this church, to be a part of God's work in this community. You are an essential part of that purpose.

*"So, we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us"*

**– Romans 12:5-6a**

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**FLY & RiSE Youth Update**

**Joe Elvis Alway, Director of Youth & Family Ministry**

On the morning of July 22, nine FLY youth participated in an outreach event at LifeWise, StL. They learned about the educational game SPENT which teaches them about poverty, homelessness, and how to make it work when your income is limited.

As a result of their experiences many meaningful conversations about empathy, gratitude, and challenges various families have faced happened between the youth. We also volunteered at LifeWise, StL by sorting donations to give away to the Bodega, as well as pricing clothing and other items. A big thanks goes out to Kate Larson who drove some of the youth and volunteered alongside all these awesome kids! I really appreciated her support.



We went to lunch and enjoyed some fellowship time before heading back home.

I then joined our RiSE Youth group for a movie outing that afternoon. We watched Moana! Two FLY youths served as mentors and support. What a great day spent serving, learning, laughing, fellowshiping, and discipling! Thanks again to everyone who gave of themselves in service to others today.

Thanks for your continued prayers & support for our youth ministry. Our young people experienced amazing things to help them grow in compassion, strength their faith, & discover joy in service to others.

Peace,  
Joe Elvis

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**2027 ELCA Youth Gathering  
Information Meeting**



## Joe Elvis Alway, Director of Youth & Family Ministry

Dear FLY Parents:

We are excited to begin planning for the **2027 ELCA Youth Gathering** in Minneapolis, taking place **June 28–July 2, 2027!**

If your student will be in **8th–12th grade at the time of registration (Fall 2026)**, we invite you and your student to attend an **informational meeting** to learn more about this incredible faith experience.

### Information Meeting

**Date:** Sunday, September 20

**Time:** 10:00–10:50 a.m.

**Location:** FLY Room

The ELCA Youth Gathering is held every three years and brings together thousands of high school youth and adult leaders from across the country for worship, service, learning, fellowship, and faith formation. It's an unforgettable opportunity for students to grow in their faith, build lasting friendships, and experience the wider church in meaningful ways.

Here is a short video that shares what the Youth Gathering means to the young people who have experienced it.



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