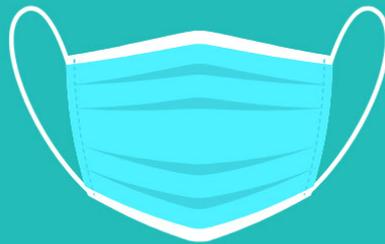


2020-2021

# ANNUAL REPORT



good shepherd

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[www.goodshepherd-naperville.org](http://www.goodshepherd-naperville.org)



## A MESSAGE FROM SENIOR PASTOR MARK CARLSSON

*He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”*

*Ephesians 4:16*

May 2021

Dear Good Shepherd Family,

As Christie and I strolled in The Morton Arboretum recently, a variety of flowers and buds, colors and scents filled our senses. Spring is in full bloom! A new season of growth and flourishing in nature is on the way. That is my hope and prayer for this next season of our church as well.

Throughout Scripture, God makes it clear that he wants his people to grow and flourish, both individually and collectively. One key passage stating this is Ephesians 4:15-16: *“we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”* Jesus brings this about by grace as we intentionally collaborate with him.

To that end, our Vision Team recently began an exciting 9-month journey with the consulting group, Auxano (the Greek word for “grow”). During this process we will take a closer look at our mission, values and strategy and receive input into how to best be the church and do ministry in our changing world. I invite you to join us in praying for a fruitful process leading to greater church health and growth!

As we trust this report shows, there is so much from this past year to celebrate.

- **Our fantastic team of pastors, staff and volunteers** have continually adapted to help keep us connected, growing, worshipping, serving and reaching, through both on-line and in-person ministry.
- **Our dedicated Council** has provided governance, oversight and support to our staff and congregation.
- **Our vibrant congregation** has continued to show and share the love of Christ through prayers, presence, witness, service and generosity.

I am deeply grateful for your partnership on this journey of leading people into a growing relationship with Jesus and his people for the glory of God and the good of the world.

I stand in awe of God’s faithfulness and look forward to the future he has in store for us!

Love in Christ,  
Pastor Mark

## ACTIONABLE LOVE BY THE CHURCH

Contributor: Jeannine Allen, Director of Missions

*Not being able to physically gather required that we look for new and altered ways to be “the church” in action amid a global health pandemic, stay-at-home orders, and economic challenges. It confirmed our belief that “the church” is the community of believers and not the building!* — Jeannine Allen

We look back on a challenging year that has profoundly impacted our world. During these uncertain times, the needs of our community and world were more significant than ever before! Our mission response was to show up with actionable love wherever we could!

The distinguishing mark of a follower of Jesus Christ is our actionable love for one another. This type of love can change our lives, homes, neighborhoods, communities, and the world.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 50 Good Shepherd volunteers participated in painting and refurbishing two homes with Rebuilding Together Aurora: One belonging to a disabled veteran and the other to a senior in need.

- Inner city serving with First Trinity of Chicago to benefit God’s Closet clothing pantry
- Collected/shipped 366 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child
- Adopted 51 residents at DuPage Care Center (Shining Stars) in their Adopt-A-Resident program
- Sponsored 125 children of incarcerated parents (Angel Tree) through Prison Fellowship
- Routinely stocked the shelves at Hesus House and other mission partners with necessities.
- Partnered with Loaves and Fishes to provide Holiday Meals; served isolated seniors
- Shipped 80 handmade quilts to refugees through Lutheran World Relief
- Prepared and delivered 1,800+ meals to the guests of Hesus House and altered operations.

- Partnered with Feed the Need in February to reach the goal of feeding 2,021 children for a year! Hosted two packing sessions with over 149 volunteers, the largest Feed My Starving Children group since the pandemic began.
- Partnership with Jewel and our Congregational Care Team to host a COVID-19 vaccine clinic at Good Shepherd for 570 members of our church and community.

### GENEROSITY MATTERS

Your generous giving makes all of this possible! Good Shepherd has contributed \$300,000 this fiscal year to reach the world with the hope and love of Jesus!

*“So I give you now a new commandment: Love each other just as much as I have loved you. For when you demonstrate the same love I have for you by loving one another, everyone will know that you’re my true followers.”*

*John 13: 34 – 35 TPT*

### GENEROSITY FACTS Contributor: April Fecht, Finance Director

- General offering contributions remain strong, only 7% below the same period last year(pre-COVID), and 10% below budget
- 46% of general offering contributions given electronically, up from 29% last year
- Over 45 first time givers since July 2020
- 69 contributors have transitioned to e-giving through Realm, the new church software



## FAMILY MINISTRIES

*Contributors: Bethany Hammer, Elisabeth Lectka, Danielle Schaeffer, Caryn Schatz, Family Life Directors*

### CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

**Sparks.** Average of 12 kids per weekend since reopening. *Children's table for attending service together as a family and weekly coloring pages.*

**Club 45.** Average Participation is 35 kids in-person and 17 online weekly.

**Resurrection Egg Hunt.** 65 families, including 8 new families! *The Bible story experience was preferred over the traditional egg hunt.*

**First Communion and Retreat.** 36 communicants and their parents.

**Back-to-School** Care Packages (sent to homes) and Parking Lot Prayer Event. *The experience allowed a time for families to pray together.*

**Baptism Baskets** now include a toddler Bible, music CD, personally embroidered lovie, and a framed verse. Parents are encouraged to pray the verse over their child each day. Also includes child development tools and tips for sharing God's love during life stages.

**VBS 2021** will be offered in-person in two sessions (morning and afternoon).



### STUDENT MINISTRIES

170 participants engaging in person and online through IGNITE, FUEL, and Faithwalk.

**Winter Retreat.** Participants decorated their own retreat spaces at home and had small group and reflective worship moments online. In-person time included a drive in movie and a closing worship time. *One high school student led a middle school girls small group and prayed that they would connect in significant ways, even though their time together was not in-person. By the end of the weekend, they were dancing and laughing, even through their screens! God answered her prayer!*

**Modified Delta Retreat.** 50 confirmation participants, 30 upper-classmen student leaders, 8 adult leaders.

*"This retreat was an amazing experience for my daughter. She can't wait to lead next year!"*

*"My daughter begged me to stay in the parking lot after we left the church because she still had letters to read. She didn't want to leave the church because then the retreat would be over!"*

**FUEL.** Attendance since reopening in February: Average 28 students in person and 5 online, *with 1-4 new attendees invited by friends each week!*

**IGNITE.** Attendance since reopening in February: Average 40 students in person and 5 online with **a steady 5-10% increase of familiar faces returning meetings weekly.**



## GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

We've been open since September!

Social and emotional development is so important at this stage of early childhood development. We give thanks to God that we were able to offer in person classes this entire school year, following guidelines of Department of Children and Family Services, DuPage County Health Department and Good Shepherd's Reopening Team. *Our enrollment increased by 36.5% throughout this current school year!*

Our parents have expressed their sincerest gratitude that they have had a safe place for their children to learn and grow. *One mom commented, "Thank you for having in person classes, you are saving my family right now."*

Registration for the fall is full and a waitlist has been started.

*FALL 2020 BACK TO SCHOOL VERSE*

***Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.***

*Hebrews 13:8*

We encourage families to build a foundation on Jesus Christ and to grow relationships with the Trinity and one another through intergenerational disciple-making.

### FUSION MINISTRIES

Parents have a deep need for community, understanding, and acceptance. Many have felt the deep loss of relationships during this pandemic and are eager to return to campus.

25% of our families have returned to in-person worship and ministry. FIVE new families have come into Buddy Break and/or Sunday in-person worship and FUSION since we reopened.

**Small Groups** for families with special needs: Online support groups, Two Rooted discipleship groups for moms

**Buddy Break** restarted in February initially serving two families at a time in two hours slots four times a month.



## ADULT MINISTRIES

*Contributors: Heather Miller, Christine Myka, Tia & Zack Walter, Adult Ministries Coordinators*

### YOUNG ADULTS

Organic friendships developed this year within the entire YAM community, more than ever before! We gather weekly outside of official YAM events and are invested deeply into each other's lives. YAM hosted 25+ gatherings at retreats, restaurants, Feed My Starving Children, etc.

We praise God that we have welcomed **25+ new young adults** simply by inviting friends! This allows us to put our evangelism training into practice.

**Retreat.** 19 young adult participants.

**6 Small Groups** averaging 40 young adults attending weekly in person & online

- 3 YAM in person, 1 YAM online
- 1 YAM<sup>2</sup> (marrieds)
- 1 YAM Fusion (special needs)

**1 Young Adult accepted Christ** and reaffirmed her baptism.

### Evangelism Training.

13 YAM leaders trained in *Four Chair Discipling*.

### Third Thursdays.

10-15 young adults serve at Feed My Starving Children every Third Thursday of the month.

### Roots - A Mentorship Journey.

Launched a pilot group of 12 mentees and 9 mentors.

*"(I realized at the retreat) we all have our struggles, but that's what God planned for us even though it may be hard to accept. I had such a positive experience...I didn't want it to end! I will definitely be trying to dive deeper in my identity, belonging, and purpose!" — YAM participant*

*"The dialogue and scriptures helped us dive deeper in our understanding of our own and each other's needs, aiding in our constant desire to grow closer to God. A wonderful journey with some beautiful souls."*

— Marriage Ministry participant

*"I was molested at age 16. As a result I struggle with depression. Thanks to the support I've received, I've finally scheduled therapy sessions and felt comfortable telling that part of my story!"*

— YAM participant



### WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

**Growth Groups.** 100+ women join live on Zoom weekly for a lesson and small group discussion; an additional 100+ watch the lesson on-demand. We studied Ruth, the life of the apostle Paul, Philippians, and Psalms. Bonus: digital meetings allow our snowbirds to stay engaged from Florida all winter!

**At-Home Advent Tea — apart, but together.** Over 250 women viewed online for a message and lighting the first candle of Advent in our homes. Daily devotional reflections written by the women of Good Shepherd were sent to 400 women via email or as printed booklets.

### MARRIAGE MINISTRY

432 registered participants.

**Marriage Enrichment Activities**  
**Date Night Boxes.** 40 marriages were enriched with custom assembled boxes in the fall.

**Lenten Devotional.** All participants received weekly encouragement with "The Love Challenge".

**Serving Event.** Couples served together at Hesus House packing ~100 meals for their guests.

**Marriage Built to Last Study.** 15 couples participated in this 6-week study by Chip Ingram.

### 55+ MINISTRY

**Lessons from Luther** Zoom event with Dr. Kurt Hendel.

**Fellowship Event.** UNfire Pit and lunch at the back of the church.

### WELCOME MINISTRY

**Weekly Virtual Connect Time** was led by 6 volunteers, but will transition back to in-person welcome team on Sundays.

### SMALL GROUPS

30 active small groups church-wide, some within other ministries

### Oneness Embraced Study.

Small groups were revived when 8 newly formed groups and 10 existing groups participated in this Tony Evans study about racial unity.

**Sermon Discussion Guides** are now available online weekly for reflection and discussion.

**Rooted Study.** 200 people have participated in *Rooted* church-wide. Upon completion, groups are encouraged to continue on the discipleship pathway through two more studies, keeping them in the rhythms established through *Rooted* of daily devotion, prayer, sharing stories, freedom from strongholds, serving the community, sacrificial generosity, and celebration.



**One of our goals last year was to explore a discipleship pathway resource.** We are pleased to have identified and launched *Rooted* as this resource.

*Rooted* isn't simply a bible study or a book. It is a community experience, where people practice 7 rhythms essential to a healthy relationship with Jesus. Individuals establish firm roots in the Truth of God's Word through personal study, then come together to discuss their study in a space where they are safe and known.

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRIES

*Contributor: Pamela Palmer, Director of Congregational Care*

We provide compassionate care through individual connection, group support, prayer, and events. We serve those experiencing difficult situations in life, grieving, and/or struggling with emotional and mental health.

### Call Campaign.

40 callers. For the third campaign since the beginning of the pandemic, the team reached 2,000 members to check in and offer care

### Hope for Mental Health

14 leaders; 12 requests to connect confidentially to a local mental health resource. Hosted online *Coping with Covid* 2-part series.

### 1310 Prayer Ministry

8 leaders; 10 regular attenders. New format includes weekly prayercasts (130 total since launch) and zoom prayer gatherings.



### Chapel Night

2 leaders; In-person Chapel Night hosts on average 10 people each first and third Monday. Online option available.

### Visitation Care Team

10 leaders; 6 new homebound care recipients, totaling 29 homebound care recipients. The team adapted from in-person visits to phone calls, emails, and mail to support our care recipients. Many started sending birthday cards and devotional books to provide encouragement.

### NEW! Grief Ministry

5 leaders; 16 participants

- GriefShare weekly support groups – offered for 14 weeks in the spring and fall.
- GriefShare Loss of a Spouse seminar – offered twice per year, in the winter and summer.

### NEW! Care Ministry Training

to expand on the existing care efforts for our members who are going through surgery, hospitalization, divorce, grief, loss, and other hardships.

*Missions and Care Ministries partnered to host a COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic in March/April. 570 people were vaccinated, and 71 volunteers served more than 310 hours to make it happen. Way to go Good Shepherd!*



# WORSHIP ONLINE & IN-PERSON

Contributors: Ryan Hammer,  
Craig Parsons, Sheila Ray

Due to reopening safety guidelines we are only able to accommodate a small number of people in-person, so the vast majority of our engagement and viewership is occurring online.

We've consistently tried new things to reach as many people as possible. From here on out, we are a church that needs to be 100% in-person and 100% online.

**Livestreaming Equipment.** Thanks to a generous church investment, we purchased new equipment including six cameras. In our local community, we're now able to reach shut-ins who were unable to worship with us pre-pandemic. Globally, we've reached people in France, Honduras, Bolivia, Australia, Florida, California, Michigan and more!

**Video Devotionals.** We developed unique video daily devotions during:

- Thanksgiving Week
- Lent Wednesdays
- Holy Week

**New Original Worship Songs:**

*Radiant, Lift Our Eyes, Till Everyone Hears*

**Drive In Christmas Eve.** We hosted the first ever "Drive-In Christmas Eve" where guests worshiped together in the Good Shepherd parking lot. This included a DJ-led preservice, fun family games and a parking lot host team, culminating in an impactful offering of *Silent Night*.



## AVERAGE NEW YOUTUBE SUBSCRIBERS PER MONTH



2018-2019



2019-2020



2020-2021

## EASTER WORSHIP



100%  
IN-PERSON

ATTENDANCE  
3209 IN-PERSON  
0 ONLINE VIEWS



100%  
ONLINE

ATTENDANCE  
0 IN-PERSON  
1546 UNIQUE  
YOUTUBE VIEWS  
2951 3-SECOND  
FACEBOOK VIEWS



25%  
IN-PERSON  
75%  
ONLINE

ATTENDANCE  
482 IN-PERSON  
1165 UNIQUE  
YOUTUBE VIEWS  
1007 3-SECOND  
FACEBOOK VIEWS

