

# 2023-2024

## ANNUAL REPORT

He Has Lifted the World

He Has Lifted the World

good  
shepherd  
CHURCH

# MISSION STATEMENT

Inviting everyone to walk together in the calling of Christ for a life of **eternal impact**.

Invite .....	6
Walk .....	10
Impact .....	14
Budget .....	18



# PASTOR LETTER

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude for all that God has done in the life of this church. Over the past year, I feel this



undeniable sense of being home when I worship with you, serve with you, dream with you, and pray with you. The power of the Holy Spirit is at work in the people that make up this church, and I'm in awe of all that He is doing.

In the past year, Pastor Greg Wenhold returned to Good Shepherd, and we were able to welcome Pastor Jake Roberts to Good Shepherd. Alongside Pastor

Pamela Palmer, I am in awe of the pastoral team that serves with me at this church, as well as the staff, which includes five new leaders in key roles across multiple ministries. Our staff is strong and healthy and vibrant and full of hope for the future. To say I am honored to partner with them would be an understatement.

You all have also made this place feel at home for those closest to me. When my boys walk in on a Sunday morning with Jeff and I, they quickly say, "Bye, Mom and Dad!" because this is their church, and they have friends and connections and folks who are pouring into

them. As a pastor and a mom, I will forever be grateful for how you all have welcomed them.

At this point, my mom doesn't like to leave the house. But she likes to come to church. I shared on Easter how my mom is a daughter of the resurrection, and I get to see that every time she comes to church. This is her happy place - this is also her home.

In this past year, we also had our fair share of tough conversations. Our pastoral staff sat with countless members as we processed what the past several years have looked like for this church. We also walked together as our Church Council led us through a denominational shift. This was a process that was covered in prayer, and ultimately, we are confident and excited about how God has prepared Good Shepherd Church for our next chapter.

In the next few pages, you will find ways that we have focused on inviting everyone to walk together in the calling of Christ for a life of eternal impact. May it bring back memories, a smile to your face, and ultimately a sense of excitement as we look forward to what lies ahead for our church. Believe that our best days are yet to come.

May God bless you abundantly as we embark on this exciting journey together.

With heartfelt gratitude and anticipation,

Senior Pastor Tara Beth Leach

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tara Beth Leach". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

# INVITE

"I'm thrilled to be back on staff at Good Shepherd, and with the recent additions of Good Shepherd in 5 and the several Getting to Know Good Shepherd Membership Classes, we have certainly had a lot to celebrate over the past year! In just a few months of hosting Good Shepherd in 5, we have doubled the number of connect cards that are turned in on a typical week. I am regularly meeting with people who are new to our congregation, and connecting deeper with those who previously had no physical place to go get questions answered. We've also seen 63 families go through new membership classes since December, which is just one example of how God is moving in the lives of so many in this church. I love my job!"



– LJ Martin, *First Impressions and Engagement Minister*

**47%** increase in total attendance year to year  
(2022 March-2023 Feb) vs (2023 March-2024 Feb)

Livestreams up by nearly

**19%**

in attendees compared  
to this time last year



Over  
**1000**  
people attended  
Encounter Christmas XIV,  
highest since 2018



50

baptisms since this time last year



35

students affirmed their baptism through confirmation this year

49

kids participated in first communion this year



“Psalm 98:1 exhorts us to, “sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!” Good Shepherd, there is certainly a new song that is being birthed from our congregation for this new season.



You can hear it in the buzzing conversations in the cafe every Sunday. You can feel it in your soul as we communally join our voices to lift praise to God within our worship spaces. You can experience it as we frequently celebrate both infant and adult baptisms in services. You can see it in the smiles and sense it in the energy as our building comes alive each weekend. God is surely doing a new thing, and we are singing a

new song right along with Him! We are always asking ourselves what have we seen God do before? What is God doing now in our midst? And what is God going to do next? We do this to be on mission with God, to be formed by God, and to have deep encounters with God. May our worship always seek to lift the name of Jesus higher than our names, or any other name. For He alone is worthy!”

– Ryan Hammer, Creative Arts Executive Minister

## SERVE

We have had monthly serving opportunities at Dupage Care Center, Hesed House, and Loaves and Fishes – The perfect way to invite people to get to know our church and our church’s heart for making an impact!

# WALK

"It's easy to come into a church, sit in a seat, listen to a good message and good music, maybe grab a cup of coffee, and then go home. It's rather easy to go through this pattern week after week, month after month, and maybe even year after year. We come in the same and we leave the same. But we at Good Shepherd believe there is so much more in store. We believe that God has something specific in store for every person that comes through our door. This is true for every person who wonders about faith, wonders about who God is,



and wonders if they have a part to play in the grand scheme of things. As a Church, we take people on the journey of invite, walk, and impact. We invite them to come and see, even to see again with fresh eyes what God is up to. To see that God is at work in the life of our church and God has something for them, too. We ask them to walk with us. To take steps of discipleship, to say yes to the Jesus way of life, to come

close to other people so they know they do not walk this life alone. And then we challenge them to live a life of impact. Our faith is a lived faith. We care for our neighbors, we take care of those in need, we choose to be bothered by the injustice around us, and we know God has chosen us to do something about it. This is the journey God is taking us on, to invite others, to walk together, and to see our lives impact and echo into eternity."

– Jake Roberts, Church Life Executive pastor

## FAMILY ADVENT NIGHT

**213** people registered to start Advent together as a community during Family Advent Night

## EASTER BASH

**309** Registered for Easter Bash – **35** of whom were with paired with buddies from our disability ministry

## VBS

**328** kids and **186** leaders participated in 2023

## PRESCHOOL

**146** families connected to our preschool with **153** students

**3** families in the past year alone have become members of Good Shepherd Church

**79** current preschool families, many past families, and at least 1 incoming family have attended key church events like Easter Bash, Advent Night, and VBS

**5** new teachers this year

**10** members of our staff with a BA or BS in Elementary Education or Early Childhood Education

We're growing! Enrollment has grown throughout the year in each of the past three years. At the start of the 2021 school year, we had 104 students. At the end of this school year we will have **156!**

## BUDDY BREAK

About **40** kids every month participate in Buddy Break, and each child gets paired with a volunteer buddy every single month.



# CARE

## MINISTRY

21

new volunteers/leaders across all care ministries

18

individuals and families provided meal support

20

homebound congregants visited regularly

75

attendees across all support groups (divorce, grief, widows, widowers)

60

attendees to Blue Christmas

12

people received one-on-one care with a care minister

5

people connected to a local mental health resource through our HOPE team

"We live out mission as a church by walking together. One of the ways in which we see this happening in our church community is when we connect with, serve, and care for each other. We have a variety of thriving care ministries that exist to pray for one another, meet spiritual and emotional needs, provide compassionate spaces, and walk with those who are going through tough seasons in life. As a congregation that cares well and intentionally, we are embodying what it means to walk together for a life of impact. Through God's grace and power of the Holy Spirit, we can be confident that the best for Good Shepherd is ahead of us."

– Pamela Palmer, Congregational Care Executive Care Minister



## ADULTS

**Rooted:** Another **50** people have participated in our discipleship study and have formed five new Rooted groups.

**Tuesdays:** **100+** women come every week on Tuesday mornings to study God's word, and last fall a guest theologian took this group to a deeper level through a study of Sabbath.

**67** new members through Get to Know Good Shepherd, our New Member Class

# IMPACT

"We get to work alongside 22 valuable mission partners across the globe, and there are so many stories of impact over the last year, I'm simply in awe! In March, I had the joy of leading a team to Cherish Watoto for my third trip to Kenya. This was a particularly special trip because I got to see Pastor Tara Beth Leach and Ryan Hammer experience, for the first time, the wonderful community of kids and teachers at Cherish. Those of you who have experienced it firsthand know what a truly special place it is. I dream of being able to bring each and every member of our church there one day! I am constantly in awe of the lives being transformed and generations being impacted on the other side of the world through the generosity of Good Shepherd. Your generosity provides teachers' salaries, education, and access to lifesaving daily nutrition for over 230 kids. And child sponsorship opens up possibilities for the students at Cherish to know that the poverty that has defined too much of their past does not have to define their future."

– Jeannine Allen, Missional Engagement Executive Minister



## FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

Good Shepherd filled **690 volunteer positions** at the 2024 Feed the Need MobilePack. **800,928 meals were packed**, feeding **2,194 kids** for the next year. Feed the Need is a community event that requires 3,000 volunteer positions to be successful. This means that over 1 out of 5 volunteers at Feed the Need were a part of the Good Shepherd Community.





## LOAVES AND FISHES

Recently, 35 of us had fun serving together at Loaves and Fishes during Lent. Our team helped prepare food bags for the **9,000 individuals** served by Loaves and Fishes each week! We're looking forward to many ways we can partner together in 2024 and beyond.



## HESED HOUSE

The lack of affordable housing in our community, combined with high food costs, has had a devastating impact on low income populations. Homelessness is on the rise. Hased House, which is Illinois' second largest emergency shelter, was at



capacity much of this year. Good Shepherd's teams prepare and serve every other month, totaling about **3,100 hot, delicious meals served each year.**



## LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

On "For the World" Sunday we partnered with LWR where 398 participants helped pack **2,039 school kits**. The estimated cost of the supplies donated is **\$33,000, the largest single donation** of its kind to Lutheran World Relief. In addition, **216 handmade quilts** are also destined for LWR distribution.



# BUDGET

"When reviewing Good Shepherd's finances, I am thrilled about the direction we are heading as a church! Over the past year, we have seen 86 families make a first-time gift to God through Good Shepherd, and 69 families have taken a step in faithfulness by becoming recurring givers. These steps and others are all leading to a \$400,000+ increase over last year's giving.

The trajectory we are on as a church, through God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, is undeniable. I see this forward direction when I look at our budget, and want to highlight our investment

in the future. A significant amount of our forecasted deficit is from initial investments in the long-term future of our church. Actions like launching a generosity initiative to inspire our congregation and moving towards a new denomination (the LCMC) that better aligns with our church's culture are reflective of intentional stewardship of the resources God has entrusted to us.

We are on this trajectory because of your faithfulness! Thank you for your partnership in inviting everyone to walk together in the calling of Christ for a life of eternal impact!"

- Tom Anderson,  
*Operations Executive Director*



2024-2025 PROPOSED ONE FUND SPENDING PLAN	2022-2023 ACTUAL	2023-2024 BUDGET	2023-2024 FORECAST	2024-2025 BUDGET
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**OPERATING REVENUE**

Offering	\$2,499,531	\$3,100,000	\$2,931,147	\$3,400,000
Other	\$33,466	\$48,170	\$28,873	\$31,258
<i>Revenue Total:</i>	<b>\$2,532,997</b>	<b>\$3,148,170</b>	<b>\$2,960,020</b>	<b>\$3,431,258</b>
Benevolence (10% of Total Revenue)	\$(253,059)	\$(314,817)	\$(296,002)	\$(343,126)

**OPERATING EXPENSE**

Contracted Services*	\$(103,075)	\$(70,863)	\$(230,720)	\$(102,455)
Mortgage Interest	\$(79,070)	\$(72,005)	\$(83,185)	\$(77,156)
Communications	\$(12,070)	\$(15,971)	\$(13,692)	\$(9,454)
Property	\$(338,392)	\$(307,600)	\$(322,776)	\$(320,502)
Administration	\$(79,510)	\$(92,050)	\$(91,901)	\$(95,327)
Other	\$(34,921)	\$(32,833)	\$(32,689)	\$(24,398)
<i>Expense Total:</i>	<b>\$(647,038)</b>	<b>\$(591,322)</b>	<b>\$(774,963)</b>	<b>\$(629,292)</b>

<b>Net Operating:</b>	<b>\$1,632,900</b>	<b>\$2,242,031</b>	<b>\$1,889,055</b>	<b>\$2,458,840</b>
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Salaries & Benefits	\$(1,659,228)	\$(1,993,319)	\$(1,970,261)	\$(2,233,707)
Salaries % of Offering	66.4%	64.3%	67.2%	65.7%

<b>Cash Flow Before Ministries:</b>	<b>\$(26,328)</b>	<b>\$248,712</b>	<b>\$(81,206)</b>	<b>\$225,133</b>
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**MINISTRIES**

Missions	Revenue:	\$393,355	\$179,600	\$237,342	\$228,200
	Expenses:	\$(392,601)	\$(183,730)	\$(239,987)	\$(233,630)
	<i>Net:</i>	\$754	\$(4,130)	\$(2,645)	\$(5,430)
Café	Revenue:	\$10,150	\$11,890	\$10,895	\$12,465
	Expenses:	\$(8,117)	\$(10,769)	\$(11,013)	\$(11,328)
	<i>Net:</i>	\$2,033	\$1,121	\$(118)	\$1,137
Preschool	Revenue:	\$521,408	\$595,101	\$658,878	\$631,545
	Expenses:	\$(403,643)	\$(518,992)	\$(558,149)	\$(521,545)
	<i>Net:</i>	\$117,765	\$76,109	\$100,729	\$110,000
Children	Revenue:	\$22,617	\$26,255	\$26,332	\$35,570
	Expenses:	\$(28,894)	\$(40,950)	\$(35,236)	\$(47,200)
	<i>Net:</i>	\$(6,277)	\$(14,695)	\$(8,904)	\$(11,630)

		2022-2023 ACTUAL	2023-2024 BUDGET	2023-2024 FORECAST	2024-2025 BUDGET
Students	Revenue:	\$46,423	\$57,875	\$56,877	\$49,800
	Expenses:	\$(55,312)	\$(65,025)	\$(61,732)	\$(59,950)
	Net:	\$(8,889)	\$(7,150)	\$(4,855)	\$(10,150)
Disability	Revenue:	\$3,781	-	-	-
	Expenses:	\$(7,830)	\$(12,110)	\$(6,718)	\$(11,214)
	Net:	\$(4,049)	\$(12,110)	\$(6,718)	\$(11,214)
Family Life	Revenue:	-	\$1,200	\$460	\$500
	Expenses:	-	\$(5,200)	\$(3,982)	\$(4,400)
	Net:	-	\$(4,000)	\$(3,522)	\$(3,900)
Adult	Revenue:	\$13,139	\$23,400	\$17,102	\$15,000
	Expenses:	\$(17,657)	\$(39,320)	\$(23,708)	\$(30,636)
	Net:	\$(4,518)	\$(15,920)	\$(6,606)	\$(15,636)
Outreach	Revenue:	-	-	-	-
	Expenses:	\$(1,674)	\$(2,200)	\$(4,209)	\$(6,075)
	Net:	\$(1,674)	\$(2,200)	\$(4,209)	\$(6,075)
Worship	Revenue:	\$1,620	\$900	\$835	\$850
	Expenses:	\$(30,261)	\$(30,400)	\$(30,316)	\$(31,030)
	Net:	\$(28,641)	\$(29,500)	\$(29,481)	\$(30,180)
Congregational Care	Revenue:	\$700	\$960	\$865	\$825
	Expenses:	\$(2,919)	\$(4,635)	\$(4,365)	\$(4,753)
	Net:	\$(2,219)	\$(3,675)	\$(3,500)	\$(3,928)
Fellowship*	Revenue:	\$30,818	\$30,200	\$29,554	\$34,312
	Expenses:	\$(41,236)	\$(35,650)	\$(78,923)	\$(42,650)
	Net:	\$(10,418)	\$(5,450)	\$(49,369)	\$(8,338)
Ministries Total	Revenue:	\$1,044,011	\$927,381	\$1,039,140	\$1,009,067
	Expenses:	\$(990,144)	\$(948,981)	\$(1,058,338)	\$(1,004,411)
	Net:	\$53,867	\$(21,600)	\$(19,198)	\$4,656
Loan Principal		\$(220,055)	\$(227,115)	\$(222,457)	\$(229,790)
Transfer to Capital Reserve / Restricted Account		\$(3,000)	-	\$(20,670)	-
One-time Expenses		\$(52,900)	-	\$(172,491)	-
Transfer from Capital Reserve / Restricted Account		\$52,900	-	\$172,491	-
<b>TOTAL CASH FLOW:</b>		<b>\$(195,516)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$(343,531)</b>	<b>-</b>

\* Contracted Services & Fellowship forecasts include several investments with future returns (e.g., generosity initiative, transition to LCMC, ERC filing, etc.)



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