

Shepherd's Voice

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Feeding bodies, minds, and souls...

Volume 13 • Issue 1

January 2017 Edition

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*February Newsletter
Articles
Due January 25, 2017*

January



**Good Shepherd
Lutheran Church
4000 Clayton Road
Concord, CA 94521
925-682-8410
gsconcord.com**

Sunday Worship at 9:00 a.m.

**Refreshments and
Sunday School for All Ages
begins at 10:15 a.m.**

Rev's Reflections

I have a confession to make. I don't remember a single one of my 2016 New Years' resolutions; I didn't write them down. I am sure it was something like, "work out more," "lose weight," "read something other than theology," because those are goals I always have in the background of my mind. And as I write this article, I have this nagging feeling I should write down those things I want to accomplish in this new year. Lewis Carroll says, "Any road will get you there, if you don't know where you are going." If I don't write down my goals, if I don't commit, then I won't work on anything.

Often we don't know where we want to go in our spiritual lives, therefore, we don't set any kind of goal. But, we can make goals for ourselves when it comes to our spiritual lives. In the middle of last year I recognized I was using language that was inappropriate, especially in front of my children. I became aware of this when my children pretended to be me in the car and then started making bleeping sounds because they knew they aren't allowed to say some words. So, they were mimicking what happens on TV when those words are said. Sometimes your children can cut deep. I immediately felt convicted.

Scripture tells us, "The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good, and the evil person out of evil treasure produces evil; for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks" (Luke 6:45). OUCH! Sometimes scripture cuts through the soul like a knife. This means the words we use and how we use them matter. If we use words that are bitter and hurtful and full of anger, then we are showing what is in our heart. I had to come to the real conclusion there was something wrong inside that had been manifesting itself on the outside. My mouth was speaking what was in my heart; this is a spiritual issue. I was putting out in the world the discontentment and lack of self-control in my own soul, rather than the joy that is found in Jesus. Enough was enough. I asked my children to hold me accountable. Anytime I said one of the words they couldn't say, I owed 25 cents to the jar.

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I wish I could say the jar is empty. I've learned it is difficult to break ingrained habits. But, I will say every month it seems like the amount is less. In fact, this last week my wife said to me, "Your language has really improved since you began working on it." I feel like my heart is lighter as well.

My hope as a follower of Jesus is not that I am perfect in all I do. My goal is accomplished in the striving to be like our Lord. The journey itself is the goal. I want to bring life, joy, encouragement, understanding, empathy, and love to the world in my words and actions just as Jesus did.

I think we need to set all kinds of goals for ourselves, including ones that focus on our spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being. I hope in this new year you choose to be more like Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. This year may God show you how to live like Jesus, and may you listen and respond.

Peace,
Rev

Beginning on Saturday, January 28, 2017
Join Rev for a Men's Bible Study and Pancake Breakfast
8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.



January 2017 Leisure Lunch
Start the New Year with a delicious hot lunch and fellowship!
Tuesday, January 17
from Noon - 1:30 in Fellowship Hall.
Call Susan and Bob Ripley at 925-827-9717 for questions.
Everyone is welcome!

Good Shepherd Book Club January 2017

A FULL LIFE: REFLECTIONS AT NINETY by former President Jimmy Carter is the book we will be discussing at our next meeting on January 10, 2017. Jimmy Carter, thirty-ninth President, Nobel Peace Prize winner, international humanitarian, and fisherman, reflects on his full and happy life with pride, humor, and a few second thoughts.

Join us at 7:30 p.m., in the Fireside Room, Tuesday, January 10,
to discuss this book and the devout Christian man who wrote it.
Questions? Contact Donna at donna@albrechts.com.

Violence, Corruption and Unemployment in El Salvador, Home of Our Sister Parish

In February, 1980, Archbishop Oscar Romero wrote to U.S. President Jimmy Carter pleading with him to suspend the U.S. military aid to El Salvador's military. He advised Carter the "Political power is in the hands of the armed forces. They know only how to repress the people and defend the interest of the Salvadorian oligarchy." Romero wrote that U.S. support would only "sharpen the injustice and repression against the organizations of the people which repeatedly have been struggling to gain respect for their fundamental human rights." Archbishop Romero was assassinated a month later while saying Mass and the U.S. continued to support the El Salvadorian military during the Reagan and Bush administrations.

Today, even though the civil war officially ended in 1992, many of the human rights violations that Archbishop Romero wrote about still exist. On a visit to El Salvador Sue Hertless remembers Pastor Flores, a Presbyterian pastor, listed El Salvador's three major problems as violence, corruption and unemployment. As Christians we are asked to serve those less fortunate and El Salvador certainly qualifies. The clothing and medical supplies Good Shepherd sent to El Salvador last September in a small way helped spread Christian hope to our sister parish and the Salvadorian people.

Violence: In 2015 there were 6,657 murders or 18 murders a day in El Salvador, a country of a little over six million people. This makes El Salvador the murder capital of the world. As high as these numbers are, they do not include unreported murders or the hundreds (or more) people who "just disappear." Most of the violence is in areas of extreme poverty and gang infestation. During Sue Hertless and Betty Jacobsen's visit to El Salvador they never once felt afraid because our hosts made sure we avoided these areas; except when we fed the homeless at Hope House. Christian, our guide, indicated that no one would bother us as we were with him and the people knew we were there to help. It's very important to have a good guide when there.

At the present time the government has been unable to find a balance between societal injustice and ways to address the root causes of violence such as lack of jobs, corrupt police forces and easy access to guns. This has resulted in thousands of youth either migrating to another country or joining gangs. It is estimated that 30% of those murdered belong to gangs. This violence and the lack of opportunities also results in many women and children fleeing the country.

Domestic Violence: Most of the domestic violence is against women. Over 4,500 cases of domestic violence and 575 domestic deaths were reported in 2015. Ongoing gang conflicts have resulted in an increase in some of the most heinous acts against women. Rape and sexual assaults are often committed by gangs and security forces. Abortion and miscarriage were criminalized in 1998 and 129 women have been prosecuted for homicide. Women have even been imprisoned for having a miscarriage or still birth.

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January Birthdays

Julie Sasaoka	04
Jauire Welsh	04
Kim Christiana	05
Austin Fiene	08
Mary Figueroa	09
Candace Bradley	10
Ed Chambers	12
Christy Dankowski	12
Ryan Kich	14
Angie Morgan	15
Suzanne Christensen	17
Sam Buchholz	22
Phil Kich	22
Craig Peterson	23
Joann Rossi	25
Sherry Chaplin	26
Patricia Fiene	27
Linda Mahloch	28
Carol Beran	29
Susan Brodley	29
Ronald Fassl	29
Glen Bradley	30



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Much like here in the states women often stay quiet about domestic violence and fail to report it to authorities. In El Salvador this is due to fear, shame, terror and above all lack of trust in the judicial system as there is widespread immunity for aggressors of domestic violence.

Corruption: There is political and business corruption in El Salvador. Some reports indicated that in 2015, 74% of human rights violations were against police and soldiers. This might be due to gang-on-gang violence not being reported. When Sue and Betty were in El Salvador they observed garages, car dealerships, computer stores, banks and even a busy ice cream parlor being quietly guarded by armed guards, yet they were never afraid.

Unemployment: Sixty percent of people are unemployed in El Salvador or “live in the shadows” (work for cash or barter). A professional earns about \$240 per month in the urban area and \$180 in the rural area.

Pastor Flores and Christian, our contacts at Resurrection, do not see El Salvador as “gloom and doom” because progress is being made. As Christians they are using education to make people aware of the relationship between their faith, family, social justice and community responsibility. They emphasize an approach to problem solving that involves faith based and governmental interaction. Ever so slowly progress is being made to address social injustice.

As Good Shepherd makes plans for a trip to our sister parish in 2017, we hope you will prayerfully consider going. You will meet some beautiful people who have so little but a strong faith, stay at the Bishop’s Compound and, have an experience of a lifetime observing God’s work at Resurrection that will have a profound effect on your life. There will also be time for some touristy things like being able to visit the National Cathedral, Oscar Romero’s home, the University, the beautiful countryside and maybe even hike to an inactive volcano or visit an art community.

Let’s keep Resurrection Lutheran Church, their Bishop and the people of El Salvador in our prayers as we plan this trip.

Evangelism Committee

DID YOU KNOW?

You can subscribe to our electronic weekly email blast and monthly color newsletter by visiting our website at gsconcord.com and scrolling to the bottom right, then click on the button: “Join Our Email List”.



Wedding Anniversaries

No
Wedding
Anniversaries
This
Month



Ruth Circle Bible Study

Ruth Circle Bible Study on
Thursday, January 12 at
10:00 am to 12: 00 noon.

Meeting in Fellowship Hall
for coffee and snacks.

Followed by a study of the
gospel of Galatians.
A Discussion where Paul
explains being justified by
grace through faith in
Christ-an idea central to
Martin Luther's under-
standing of the Christian
tradition.

Any questions please call
Donna Monroe 682-6766

Reverse Advent Boxes

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Reverse Advent Boxes
during the 2016 Season of Advent.

On Christmas Eve we received 24 boxes filled with goods totaling
approximately \$3,600 for our Friends Feeding Friends program.

Thank you to our Sunday School children and their teachers, who so
lovingly decorated the Reverse Advent boxes used to fill.

Book Exchange — January 22

On Sunday, January 22 after our 9:00 a.m.
Worship time, in Fellowship Hall,
you are invited to bring some
books, take some books or both!
You never know what you will find at the
GSLC Book Exchange!



GSLC ANNUAL MEETING IS JANUARY 29, 2017

The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Annual Meeting will be held at 10:15 a.m., immediately
following our 9:00 a.m. Worship, in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, January 29.

This will be a potluck brunch event. Look for further information in the bulletin & email blast.

Friends Feeding Friends

An outreach ministry of Good Shepherd that serves the needy in our county

Sarah Jean's
Dream at age 4

"So people who
are really hungry
have food."



For we are
God's
workmanship
created in
Christ Jesus to
do good works,
which God
prepared in
advance for us
to do.
Ephesians
2:10

Friends Feeding Friends Highlights for the Past Month

1025 Bags of food distributed
1754 People helped with food
144 Hot Meals served

Highlights:

- We would like to thank everyone who helped us bless others this holiday season through our Reverse Advent boxes, Angel Bins athletic shoe collection, prayers and Christmas groceries. Wow, what a terrific community effort!! The Reverse Advent boxes will bless those that we furnish who are leaving the shelter and transitioning to housing.
- December was our busiest month so far for food distribution. We gave away a lot of food!!
- Special thanks to all our hardworking volunteers. We couldn't reach as many people as we do without you!!!

Next Shelter Lunch: January 21, 2017, 9:00 a.m. at Good Shepherd to prep.
All are welcome!

Items needed this month (The food bank has been out of the following items):

- **Snack bars**
- **Ready-to-eat meals in pop-top cans (ravioli, chili, etc.)**
- **Lunch size canned fruit or dried fruit**



The Reverse Advent boxes shown here will go out to those leaving the shelters in the weeks ahead. The items will make their new apartments feel more like a home.



Christmas grocery boxes were distributed to needy families along with frozen meat, fresh produce and bread.

Worship Assistants January 8 to February 5, 2017	
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[illegible]

January 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 a.m. Schedule See below.	2	3	4	5 8:30 a.m. Senior Food (FH) 6:00 p.m. Lighthouse (Rm. 3) 6:30 p.m. Boy Scouts (FH)	6	7
8 9:00 a.m. Schedule See below.	8	10 2:00 p.m. Finance c 7:00 p.m. Council Meeting (FH) 7:30 p.m. GSLC Book Club (FR)	11 7:00 p.m. NA (FH)	12 10:00 a.m. Ruth Circle (FH) 10:00 a.m. DVLC Board (Rm 3) 6:00 p.m. Lighthouse (Rm.3) 6:30 p.m. Boy Scouts (FH)	13	14
15 9:00 a.m. Schedule See below. 10:00 a.m., GSLC Book Exchange (FH)	16	17 Noon Leisure Lunch 7:00 p.m. Property And Long Range (FH)	18 3:00 p.m. Worship and Music Committee (FH) 7:00 p.m. NA (FH)	19 8:30 a.m. Senior Food (FH) 6:00 p.m. Lighthouse (Rm.3) 6:30 p.m. Boy Scouts (FH)	20	21 9:00 a.m. Friends Feeding Friends (Kit) 6p.m. Pending Event
22 9:00 a.m. Schedule See below. GSLC BOOK EXCHANGE (AFER WORSHIP IN FH)	23	24 7:00 p.m. Long Range Property Comm. (FH)	25 7:00 p.m. NA (FH) Newsletter Articles Due	26 6:00 p.m. Lighthouse Chu 6:30 p.m. Boy Scouts (FH)	27	28 8:00 a.m. Men's Pancakes and Bible Study. (FH) 11 a.m. DVLC Mtg.
29 9:00 a.m. Schedule 10:15 a.m. Following Worship Potluck Brunch and ANNUAL MEETING	30	31			9:00 a.m. Sunday Schedule: 9:00 a.m. Worship (CH) 10:15 Sunday School for all 10:15 a.m. Coffee (FH) 12:30 Lighthouse (FH)(#3) 6:00 p.m. NA Group (FH)	
CH = Church		FH = Fellowship Hall		FR = Fireside Room		

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

2016 Executive Committee:

President: Greg Buchholz, **Vice President:** Leone McCullough, **Secretary:** Betty Jacobsen
Member-at-Large: John Mott

2016 Congregational Council:

Nils Anderson, Candace Bradley, Greg Buchholz, Adam Castle, Sue Hertless,
Betty Jacobsen, Leone McCullough, John Mott, Tony Rogelstad, Kelly Schaefer

Ministry Staff:

Pastor: Rev. Jeremy Serrano - rev@gsconcord.com
Office Administrator: Laura Mott - lauramott@gsconcord.com
Organist: Christopher Hewitt - chrishe Witt@gsconcord.com
Interim Choir Director: Emilie Patton
Contemporary Music Leader: Tom Deans Flegel - tdeans08@gmail.com
Sound/Technology: Jamie Rodemsky - jamier1263@gmail.com
Treasurer: Laura Mott - lauramott@gsconcord.com
Financial Secretary: Vicki Smiglewski

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

4000 Clayton Road

Concord, CA 94521



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church exists to **reach** out in Jesus name and **gather** in deep community, to **learn** and grow into God's Kingdom, to **serve** our neighbor and **worship** the creator.