

THE Shepherd's Fold

December 8, 2024

The Second Sunday of Advent

Dear Friends,

Last week I encouraged you to **Invite 3, Bring 1**. I can confirm that one person pulled me aside to tell me that they brought someone to church with them! My intention with these Advent editions of *The Shepherd's Fold* is to highlight our opportunity to welcome visitors in our parish between now and Christmas Eve. Research shows that most first time visitors will decide within their first five minutes into their visit whether or not to come again. **This means we have five minutes to show them who we are.** No pressure!

Here is another example of what we can do to be more welcoming: try sitting in the pews at the front of the church. Yes, I know, that might mean moving out of the pew that your family has occupied for generations. It might even mean sitting near new people, but I'd like to explain with a story:

Brenda, a curious visitor, walks into the church just minutes before the 8:30 service one Sunday morning. Seeing that the back rows are already filled, our visitor has to sit where the open pews are: up front. Brenda hasn't been to church in years and feels a bit exposed, maybe even awkward, as she is sitting in front of so many strangers. She is unfamiliar with Episcopal liturgy and hopes she doesn't "mess anything up." Brenda would have preferred some anonymity in the back and the opportunity to watch and learn how Good Shepherd "does" Sunday morning. It gets especially lonely during the Peace when no one is close enough to greet her. Brenda feels she is on the outside looking in, unsure whether she will come back...

This is a fictional story, of course, but it is also a realistic composite. We need to view this as an exciting opportunity! There is an evangelistic imperative to show true hospitality in front of us: by moving forward during church we are creating space for first time visitors and young families, two groups of people who have no desire to disrupt the service or sit up front. We can show strangers and visitors the love of God and the warmth of our church by leaving the back pews open. Let's give each visitor a warm welcome at the door and a sense of ease when they walk into the Nave. Let's practice this together for the next three Sundays as we prepare for our Christmas Eve services. *And who knows...you might even find that God is present in every pew!*

Peace,
Porter+

STEWARDSHIP

Our Ingathering is **this Sunday**, December 8. You can still submit your pledge online, by return mail, or in the offering plate. Every pledge that we have received will be brought forward during the Offertory at both services and prayed over. I am inviting all members of our parish to 100% participation in financial support of the mission and vision of Good Shepherd in 2025. Your pledge will help us fulfill the ministry to which God has called us and turning your card in on or before will help us set our 2025 budget.

ADVENT RESOURCES

Printed copies of our three Advent resources (Resource Guide, O Antiphons Liturgy, and A Liturgy for the Lighting of Advent Candles) are now available in the Foyer. Stop by and pick up a copy if you prefer a print version. We created these resources to be used and to be shared – so please enjoy them and pass them along!

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY SERIES

The Italian word *crescendo* indicates the highest point of a gradual increase in the intensity of musical notes. The incarnation of Jesus is the crescendo in a series of songs sung by three women: Miriam, Hannah, and Mary. Each of these songs focuses on what God has done, is doing, and will do - in them we see past, present, and future.

Join us on Wednesdays in Advent for our three-week series, **Crescendo: The Prophetic Songs and the Women Who Sang Them**. We will meet in the Parish Hall from 6:00-7:00pm on December 4, 11, and 18. Nursery will be provided for families with children.

RECTOR'S FORUM

Rector's Forum will resume in the Parish Hall this **Sunday, December 8th**.

ADVENT BOOK CLUB

Bishop Logue has selected *The Love That is God* by Fritz Bauerschmidt as his 1Book1Diocese Advent read. This is an amazing book and it's only 128 pages! I encourage everyone to purchase a copy and read it. For those who want to "read together," join me for a Book Club discussion on **Sunday, December 22** at 4:30pm in the Conference Room. Please purchase your copy from the Book Tavern early next week. All are invited and welcome! - Porter+

POINSETTIA PICK-UP

Please be sure to pick up your order from the Parish Hall .

COGS

Our next COGS event will be a Christmas Festival at the Byllesby Center on **December 7th** following the community meal served by Laura Irwin's group from Good Shepherd. We need volunteers for the festival from 11:30am until 2:30pm for set up and for the Christmas Festival following the meal. Please let Lynn Tyson know if you can volunteer **ltyson517@gmail.com** or call at **706-833-7415** for further information. Thanks to everyone for supporting this ministry spreading the mission of Good Shepherd in our community.

ADVENT PAGEANT

Rehearsal for the Advent Pageant will be held in the Chapel of Resurrection this Sunday at 9:45am. Sign-up sheet for Angels and Animals will be in the foyer. Children ages 3yrs - 5th grade are welcome.

THE BIBLE STORY BOOK SEARCH

If anyone has a set of the 1950's vintage hardback books, *The Bible Story*, by Arthur S. Maxwell, please contact Robin Bailie at **839-273-0059** or **Robin.bailie@gmail.com**.

GREENERY NEEDED

A small amount of fresh cypress, spruce and/or cedar is needed for greening the church for Christmas on **December 23rd**. If you have fresh greenery in your yard to share, please contact Sharon Enoch, Carol Bennett or Phyllis Strozier.

THE LOST GOSPEL OF CHRISTMAS

Mark Swanson's original musical *Misconception: The Lost Gospel of Christmas* will be produced at Augusta University at The Fine Arts Center Recital Hall one weekend only on **December 13th-14th**, at 7:30 pm with a Sunday matinee performance on Sunday, **December 15th** at 3 pm. All proceeds will be donated to the AU Music Department Scholarship Program. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at **augusta.universitytickets.com**

EDS IS LOOKING FOR SUBSTITUTE TEACHER

As a part-time substitute teacher at Episcopal Day School, you work with children, set your schedule, and, as a bonus, get paid! Training is required, but we will pay you to complete the training. If this list has you excited about your future as a substitute teacher at Episcopal Day School, please contact **Mrs. Nina Tomlin**, Assistant to the Division Heads, at **ntomlin@edsaugusta.com** or call the main office at **(706) 733-1192**. We can't wait to hear from you!




CRESCENDO:
The Prophetic Songs and the Women Who Sang Them
December 4, 11, 18
6:00 - 7:00pm



THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE A

*Festival of 9
Lessons and Carols*

SUNDAY | DECEMBER 8, 2024
SERVICE AT 6:30 PM | RECEPTION TO FOLLOW

Join us for a special evening as we honor Jim Nord on his retirement and come together to celebrate the season with a beautiful Lessons & Carols service with the Good Shepherd and St. Gregory choirs!

Designed by Jackson Evans



COME JOIN THE POSADA JOURNEY

The Hagler's
Friday, December 6th
6pm - 8pm
Please RSVP to Amy at (706) 378-8007

Servers of the Shepherd

Sunday, December 8, 2024

8:30 AM

Organist & ChoirmasterJim Nord
Lay ReadersCissy Bowden, Jennie Haynes
Verger..... Robin Baillie
Acolytes..... Clayton Adams, Porter Adams,
Sam Bradford, Chip Matson, Martha Matson

11:00 AM

Organist & ChoirmasterJim Nord
Lay ReadersAndrew Austin, Bob Nesbit
Verger..... Fred Palmer
Acolytes..... Mary Dennis Trotter, William Hargrove,
Sam Hargrove, South Bryan, Cricket Bryan

6:00 PM

Organist Nick Lowery
Lay ReadersHeather Wheeler, Lynn Tyson

All Services

Altar GuildTeam V
Breakfast Team..... Team VI
Vestry Person of the Day Paul Trotter

YOUTH NEWS

Head to the Shell Newsletter for details & to sign-up for up coming events. For any questions, email Mary Grace Wynn at mgwynn@goodshepherd-augusta.org.

YOUTH GROUP: Due to Lessons & Carols and Mr. Nord's retirement celebration reception, we will not be gathering for Youth Group this Sunday, December 8th. Save the date for next Sunday, the 15th, from 5-7:30pm, for our final Youth Group gathering of the year - our annual Christmas Party! Caroling, White Elephant, games, and more!

ADVENT PAGEANT RECEPTION: After the Advent Pageant on **December 22nd** at the 8:30am service, we will gather in the Parish Hall for a reception celebrating our cast, animals, and angels! Sign up to bring an appetizer or dessert in the Shell Newsletter, or contact Lynn Williams.

CHRISTMAS EVE ACOLYTES: Please head to the Shell Newsletter to sign up to acolyte on Christmas Eve. Acolyte rehearsal for the 4pm and 6pm services is on Thursday, **December 19th**, at 4pm.

Christmas Altar Flowers

Contribute to the altar flowers at Christmas by completing and returning the form below. Make your gifts payable to Good Shepherd marked as *Christmas Flowers*. Forms must be received by December 15 in order to appear in the order of service.

Name: _____

Telephone: _____ Enclosed Amount: _____

In honor of/memory of (circle one) _____

By: _____