



# Along The Way

## The Weekly Newsletter of The Church of the Good Shepherd - Wareham December 11, 2024



Good Shepherd Friends,

Both last Sunday and this coming Sunday we hear from John the Baptist in the scripture readings. John the Baptist is probably not someone any of us would have associated with. He had a way of challenging his audience with the hard, yet honest truth about themselves. I image that he cut right to what were each person's distractions in life and challenged them to let them go and refocus their lives in God and in the Ways of God.

How many of us would have the courage to submit ourselves to such an examination of our lives? Probably not many of us.

Yet, that is exactly what John does. John comes before us in the Advent Season and challenges each of us to such a self-examination. Can you confidently say that your life is centered in God in all things? Can you truly say that you place your trust in God? That is, can you say that there are no other God's in whom you place your trust? If John could see your life and how you live your life, what would he have to say to you? How would he challenge you? While calling each of us to turn back to God, what would he challenge you to turn away from?

Let us prepare to more fully welcome the gift of God's presence in our lives this Christmas, by allowing John to challenge our distractions and by reorienting our lives in God.

Peace,

**Pastor Dan**

# LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

DECEMBER 15, 2024

8 AM	10 AM
<p><u>READERS:</u> CHUCK MCCULLOUGH</p> <p><u>HOSPITALITY:</u> HERB WILLIAMS</p> <p><u>EUCCHARISTIC:</u> MICHELLE MURRAY</p>	<p><u>READERS:</u> SHERYL FACCHETTI JANE MANDELL</p> <p><u>HOSPITALITY:</u> PAT PROBERT &amp; SCOOTER HOLCOMBE</p> <p><u>EUCCHARISTIC:</u> JUDY ELLIS</p> <p><u>NURSERY:</u> ELIZABETH MANDELL &amp; ANDREA LAMONTAGNE</p>

## WEEKLY SCRIPTERS

[SUNDAY READINGS](#)  
[CLICK HERE](#)

## MONTHLY VESTRY MINUTES

[VESTRY MINUTES](#)  
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## A FEW NOTES & REMINDERS

1. This coming Sunday, December 15, is a **Sunday School** Sunday. Look below for more information.
2. This coming Sunday at both Services there will be an opportunity to receive **prayers for healing**. Look below for more information.
3. **Christmas Flower forms and donation are due** this coming Sunday. Look below for more information.
4. The **Good and Green team** will be meeting this coming Sunday in the Church Hall beginning at 9am. Donations of redeemable bottles and cans and used sneakers are also being received this coming Sunday.
5. If you have parish information to pass on to the Good Shepherd community in our weekly newsletter ("Along the Way"), please submit the information to our office manager Cathi Maurice or to Pastor Dan.

[CLICK HERE FOR PARISH CALENDAR](#)



From the Green Deacon:

Happy Advent! Advent is a holy time and also time to prepare for Christmas. Sometimes that means a lot of stressful shopping, wondering what the perfect gift for each of our loved ones will be and worrying about getting it all done. This year, your Good & Green Team encourages us all to slow down and look for ways to not only simplify this precious season but also to care for God's creation when doing it. So here are a few links to sustainable ideas and to a web site called the "Advent Simplicity Challenge":

<https://ignatiansolidarity.net/advent-simplicity-challenge/>

**World Wildlife Fund UK Sustainable Christmas Tips:** <https://www.wwf.org.uk/top-tips-sustainable-christmas>

**Alternative Christmas List:** <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/ethical-christmas/your-alternative-christmas-shopping-list>

**Eco-Friendly Shopping:** [https://www.marleysmonsters.com/blogs/marleys-musings/your-guide-to-eco-friendly-shopping-for-the-holidays?srsId=AfmBOoqEP117BEL2VA0W6AG8e2B0q8ZhHvW6ED\\_BDE6qmJ4m1ioAuMJy](https://www.marleysmonsters.com/blogs/marleys-musings/your-guide-to-eco-friendly-shopping-for-the-holidays?srsId=AfmBOoqEP117BEL2VA0W6AG8e2B0q8ZhHvW6ED_BDE6qmJ4m1ioAuMJy)

Enjoy the journey of Advent and the joy of caring and loving one another, and God's good earth. God's peace to us all.

## Current Happenings

WEEKLY UPDATE

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### 2025 Stewardship Pledge Drive Update

Thank you to those of you who have returned your 2025 pledge forms. So far, we have received **60 pledges totaling \$116,024**. If you have not yet done so, please return your completed pledge forms to the church as soon as possible by placing them in the offering box in the church or by mailing them to the church. Extra pledge packets are available in the back of the church and on our [church website](#). Thank you!

### Homeless Persons Memorial Day Service

On Thursday, December 19, beginning at 6:00pm, there will be a Memorial Service held at Good Shepherd for the unhoused members of our greater Wareham community who died this past year. This Memorial Service is purposefully held when the nights are longest, reminding us of the hardship of winter for those who are unhoused. All are welcome to participate in this Service as we recognize those who died and commend them to God. The Service will take about 30 minutes. Pastors from Wareham area churches will be participating in the Service. At the Service, there will be an opportunity to donate sleeping bags (cold weather rated) and tents (four-person size preferred), or to make a financial gift so these items can be purchased and given to our unhoused community members who need them.

### Prayers for Healing – Sunday, December 15

As part of our Sunday Services on December 15, there will be an opportunity for you to receive prayers for healing. These prayers for healing will be available after the sermon. Along with the healing prayers, a blessing with blessed oil will be given. All are invited to come forward to receive healing prayers, since we are all in need of various kinds of healing in our lives.

### Good Shepherd Guild Christmas Fair - Thank you

The Guild would like to thank everyone for their donations for our Christmas Fair and all the help setting up and all the people who worked the fair. Without all of you this would have been impossible. We are grateful and thankful to everyone. *Judy Govoni*

### **Christmas Gift Cards for Children – Thank You**

Thank you to all who purchased Christmas gift cards for the children of families in need in our community. We received \$800 in gift cards this year. The cards are being distributed. Your generosity is wonderful and is very much appreciated by the children and their parents!

### **Christmas Flower and Decoration Donations**

Donations to the Church Flower Fund, on the occasion of Christmas, can be made in memory of a deceased loved one or in thanksgiving for blessings in your life. Donation forms are available at the entrances of the church and on our church website. Your donations will help us to decorate the church for the celebration of God's abiding presence in our lives. The names of those in whose name donations are made will appear in the Christmas Service Booklets. *Please return the form and your donation to the church by Sunday, December 15.* Thank you!

### **The Next Vestry Meeting**

The next meeting of the Vestry will take place on Thursday, December 12, beginning at 6:00pm. If you would like to submit possible agenda items for consideration, you can do so through Becky Hansen (Senior Warden) or Pastor Dan by December 5.

### **Our Christmas Services**

Our Worship Services in celebration of Christmas will be held on Christmas Eve at 4:30pm (Family Service with children's participation in the telling of the Christmas Story) and 8pm (Traditional Candlelight Service – with prelude music beginning at 7:40), and at 10am on Christmas Day (Traditional Service). The 8pm Service will also be on Facebook Live (beginning at 7:40pm), and a link to the recorded 8pm Christmas Eve Service will be emailed to those on our church email list following the 8pm Service.

### **Good & Green Team: Meetings & Collection**

Our monthly meetings take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month from 9-9:45am in the Church Hall. All are welcome! For more information on who we are and some "green" tips, visit the Good Shepherd web site: <https://goodshepherdwareham.org/green-team/>. Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month, the Good and Green Team collects 5 cent redeemable cans and bottles, and used sneakers; which help us raise money for sustainable efforts in our church. You can bring them in and leave them in the Church Hall before, between and after our Sunday Services. Thank you!

### **Christmas Offering**

Please consider giving a Christmas gift to The Church of the Good Shepherd this year in the way of an extra financial contribution. This time of year, we give gifts to those we love, please consider giving a gift to yourself and others through a contribution to your Good Shepherd faith community. You can do this by placing a contribution in your Christmas envelope (or another envelope marked "Christmas Offering") and placing it in the church offertory box on Christmas Eve/Day or the Sunday before or after Christmas, or by mailing it to the parish office. Thank you!

### **Bring Someone to a Christmas Service**

Do you have loved ones visiting with you on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day? Are there people you know who don't have a church affiliation or have been estranged from their present church? Are there people you know who will be alone on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day? If so, I encourage you to invite them to join you for one of our Christmas Worship Services. They promise to be beautiful celebrations of the birth of our Savior and would be a wonderful time to experience our faith community "in all its glory." Someone out there may be waiting for your invitation! *Pastor Dan*

### **Discretionary Fund Donations**

Please consider donating to the Good Shepherd Discretionary Fund. It is from the discretionary fund that Pastor Dan assists those in need. You may make contributions to the discretionary fund at any time during the month by placing them in the offering box at the entrance to the church in an envelope marked discretionary fund (there

are some in the back of the church) or by mailing them to the parish office. Checks should be made out to “Church of the Good Shepherd – Clergy Discretionary Fund.” Thank you to those who have made contributions in the past!

### **Mid-Week Eucharist**

On Wednesdays at Noon, there is a celebration of the Eucharist in the church, which is open to all. This is an opportunity to gather for prayer and reflection; and be reminded of God’s presence between Sundays. For those on your lunch break, the celebration of the mid-week Eucharist is approximately 20 minutes. ***There will not be a mid-week Service on December 25, January 1 & January 8.***

### **The Good Shepherd Food Pantry Has Closed**

The Good Shepherd Food Pantry has closed. The decision to close the Food Pantry was made due to the opening of the new Damiens Food Pantry facility earlier this year. About 80% of those who used to come to our Good Shepherd Pantry now go to Damien’s. For more information about the closing of our food pantry, please refer to the letter Pastor Dan emailed parishioners on November 4.

### **Please Stay Home When You’re Not Feeling Well**

This is a reminder that if you have covid or another contagious illness, please do not come to the church. Basically, if you are not feeling well, please stay home. It is important that you stay home and rest, and it is important that we be vigilant in order not to spread viruses with one another. Remember, the 10am Sunday Service is offered on Facebook Live every Sunday, and the link to the recorded Service is sent to those on our church email list following the live Service. Stay home, rest, and participate online.

### **Sunday School**

Sunday School is held during the first half of our 10am Sunday Service on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month. The Sunday School is located in the church meeting room, in the office area. All Sunday School volunteers have undergone CORI background checks and received training, including the Safe Church training required by the Episcopal Church for all those who work with children. Please contact Pastor Dan for more information. The registration form can be downloaded from our Good Shepherd website ([www.goodshepherdwareham.org](http://www.goodshepherdwareham.org)).

### **The Good Shepherd Sunday Nursery**

The Good Shepherd Sunday Nursery (for children through kindergarten age) is open during our 10am Sunday Services. Children are most welcome in the church, but the nursery will be available for them as well. Children can arrive at the nursery beginning at 9:50am and the nursery will close 10 minutes after the conclusion of the 10am Service. The Sunday Nursery is located on the third floor of the church, which can be accessed at the top of the church office stairwell in the back of the church building, through the door (marked Sunday Nursery). All nursery volunteers have undergone CORI background checks and received training, including the Safe Church training required by the Episcopal Church for all those who work with children. If you have questions about the nursery or would like to volunteer, please contact the church office (508-295-2840). The registration form can be downloaded from our Good Shepherd website ([www.goodshepherdwareham.org](http://www.goodshepherdwareham.org)). ***The Sunday Nursery will be closed on December 29.***

### **WCTV Sunday Service Coverage**

WCTV, the Wareham local access channel, will now be broadcasting recordings of our Sunday Services. The recorded Services will air a week later. WCTV can be found on Comcast channel 9 and Verizon channel 30. This is a good way to share Jesus’ message of love and compassion with our Wareham community, and also let people know about our Good Shepherd community.

### **Prayer Request Book**

In the back of the church on Sunday mornings, there is a Prayer Request Book. As you come into the church each Sunday, you are welcome to record in the Prayer Request Book the names of those who need prayers. During the prayers of the people, we pray for “all those whose names have been recorded in the Prayer Request Book.”

### **Sunday Coffee Hour**

Every Sunday, following the 10am Sunday Service, coffee hour is held in the Church Hall. Coffee hour is an opportunity for us to further get to know one another and share our lives with one another. The wearing of a facemask is welcome, for those who choose to wear one. Like all other indoor church functions, if you are not feeling well, please do not participate at coffee hour.

### **Good Shepherd Table**

Good Shepherd's Table serves a free in-person meal, which is open to the public, every Thursday at 4:30pm. Take-out meals are available from 4:30-4:45pm for those who choose not to eat indoors with others. Like all other indoor church functions, if you are not feeling well, please do not participate in the Good Shepherd Table indoor dining.

### **Pastoral Care**

If you would like yourself or someone else placed on the Good Shepherd prayer list, please contact me (Pastor Dan). The Good Shepherd prayer group prays daily for those on the prayer list. If you need or would like a pastoral visit from the priest, please let me know. My contact information can be found below and is also on the back of the weekly Sunday Service Booklet. The only way I know that you need a pastoral visit is if you let me know. You might want to keep my contact information (cell # 603-953-3659 for emergencies) somewhere handy, so you know where to find it if the need arises. Pastor Dan

### **Contacting Pastor Dan**

You can contact me by email ([pastor.dan.bernier@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.dan.bernier@gmail.com)), by calling the church number (508-295-2840) and leaving a message, or if it is an urgent matter by calling me through my cell phone (603-953-3659). Pastor Dan

### **Please "Like" us on Facebook**

Please like us on Facebook ("Church of the Good Shepherd Wareham") so we can get the word out about what is happening in our parish community, especially about our Facebook Live Services.