



# Along The Way

## The Weekly Newsletter of The Church of the Good Shepherd - Wareham December 18, 2024

Reflections

*From the  
Pastor*



Good Shepherd Friends,

This coming Sunday, the 4th Sunday of Advent, we will read the passage from Luke's Gospel which is just before the birth story of Jesus. Mary is pregnant with Jesus, and she is visiting her cousin Elizabeth. Have you ever wondered what Mary knew about the child she carried in her womb? Because of the story that Luke tells of Mary being visited by an angel to announce God's plans for her, we might think that Mary knew exactly who Jesus would become. But I don't believe that she knew very much about the child she was carrying. I believe her pregnancy was like any other mother's pregnancy. She had dreams for her child, she fell in love with the child even before his birth, and she prepared for his arrival into this world.

No, I don't think she knew exactly who Jesus would become. She just loved him and taught him about God and being a good and faithful Jewish person. And that was all it took, there was nothing more that was needed. She laid the foundation, and God took it from there.

The same is true with our lives. We are called to lay the foundation or plant the seeds of the kingdom of God, and God does the rest. We spread the good news of God's love, compassion, and mercy; through our actions and through our words and God takes it from there. But if we don't spread those seeds and prepare the foundation, then God cannot build God's kingdom here on earth. Just like if Mary did not say yes to God and prepare Jesus, God's gift of salvation through Jesus may not have come about.

Each day we are asked to cooperate with God's gift of salvation for the world through our actions and through our words, through the love and compassion we witness to others. Each day we can make incarnate God's gift of love. It is a choice. Following the example of Mary, let us say YES.

Peace,

**Pastor Dan**

## LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

DECEMBER 22, 2024

8 AM	10 AM
<p><u>READERS:</u> JANET DRUM</p> <p><u>HOSPITALITY:</u> RICH SOUZA</p> <p><u>EUCCHARISTIC:</u> JOELLA CRUZ</p>	<p><u>READERS:</u> SCOOTER HOLCOMBE RICH SOUZA</p> <p><u>HOSPITALITY:</u> DAN ANNA &amp; BECKY HANSEN</p> <p><u>EUCCHARISTIC:</u> SHERYL FACCHETTI</p> <p><u>NURSERY:</u> JESSI MERRICK &amp; KERRI GALLAGHER</p>

### WEEKLY SCRIPTERS

[SUNDAY READINGS  
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### MONTHLY VESTRY MINUTES

[VESTRY MINUTES  
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### A FEW NOTES & REMINDERS

1. The *Homeless Persons' Memorial Service* is tomorrow, Thursday beginning at 6pm. All are welcomed and encourage to participate. See below for details.
2. The *Christmas Services Schedule* can be found below. Before we open our presents, let us gather to celebrate the birth of Jesus; God's love incarnate.
3. 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](#)

# Current Happenings

WEEKLY UPDATE

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## 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.

## Our Christmas Services

Our Worship Services in celebration of Christmas will be held on Christmas Eve at 4:30pm (Family Service) 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 7:40), and a link to the recorded 8pm Christmas Eve Service will be emailed to those on our church email list following the 8pm Service. *If you are not feeling well, please stay home and participate through our 8pm Facebook Live Service or through our recorded 8pm Service (a link will be sent to those on our email list after the 8pm Service, by approximately 9:30pm, which you can watch at any time thereafter).*

## 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*

## The Parish Office Hours: Christmas Week

Due to the Christmas holiday, Cathi Maurice (our parish Office Manager) will not be working from December 23-January 1. Although the Parish Office will not be formally open during that time, you can still leave a message for Pastor Dan who will be around and checking messages.

## Annual Meeting Reports

This is a reminder to all church ministry/committee leaders that your annual meeting reports are due by January 12. Please send them electronically to Cathi Maurice ([goodshepherdwareham@gmail.com](mailto:goodshepherdwareham@gmail.com)). It is important that these reports be received by January 12, so the annual meeting journal can be produced and given out the Sunday before the annual meeting. Our Office Manager is with us a limited number of hours, so please make sure the reports are submitted on time. Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for February 2. The annual meeting will also be held on Zoom. Thank you! *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 Wednesday, December 25 and January 1.***

### **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.