



# Along The Way

## The Weekly Newsletter of The Church of the Good Shepherd - Wareham February 18, 2026

Reflections

*From the  
Pastor*



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Good Shepherd Friends,

I am sorry I could not be with you as we celebrate Ash Wednesday. Today we begin the Season of Lent, which is an opportunity the church gives us to be freed from all that has taken hold of our hearts and drawn us away from God's love. Because this takes time to do, the church has given us the six weeks of Lent. Lent is a season of freedom and not meant to be a season of suffering. When we re-learn to live in God's love it brings us joy and peace. During Lent we are reminded to devote extra time to prayer, to fasting and to giving alms. But what do these mean? I invite you to look at them this way:

During these six weeks, devote a little more time to **prayer**, just 10 minutes can make a big difference. I suggest that at the beginning of your day you take 10 minutes to center yourself and your day in God's loving presence. You can pray the disciples' prayers on the Lenten prayer card you will receive on Sunday and meditate on it, then just be still and quiet and let God's peace wash over you. It will make a difference in the course of the rest of your day.

During Lent you are encouraged to **fast**. You can choose to focus your fasting on food, but I encourage you to fast on that which is unhealthy and destructive in your life. What in your life is drawing you away from God's love? Choose just one and ask God to help you to push it out of your life. Commit to this every day. And when you fail, which you will likely do, ask for God's help again and recommit yourself.

During Lent we are called to **give alms**. I encourage you to be more other-centered and less self-centered during these six weeks. The more we focus our lives outside ourselves, the more fulfilled we become. Be kind and considerate toward others. It can change your outlook on life.

So, during this holy season of Lent let us re-orient our lives back to God and God's love, so that joy and inner peace can be ours once again.

You will be in my prayers during this holy season

Peace,

**Pastor Dan**

LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE FEBRUARY 22, 2026	
8 AM	10 AM
<b><u>READERS:</u></b> JANET DRUM  <b><u>HOSPITALITY MINISTERS:</u></b> KAREN CLARK  <b><u>EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER:</u></b> MICHELLE MURRAY	<b><u>READERS:</u></b> S.G. PRESTON JUDY GOVONI  <b><u>HOSPITALITY MINISTERS:</u></b> JUDY GOVONI & RICH BALANCA  <b><u>EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER:</u></b> SHERYL FACCHETTI  <b><u>NURSERY MINISTERS:</u></b> ELIZABETH MANDELL & ANDREA LAMONTAGNE  <b><u>COFFEE HOUR HOST(S)</u></b> TBD  <b><u>SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS</u></b> NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

## WEEKLY SCRIPTERS

[SUNDAY READINGS  
CLICK HERE](#)

## MONTHLY VESTRY MINUTES

[VESTRY MINUTES  
CLICK HERE](#)

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[!\[\]\(a870788d6ed9b8fd294b7654a8c8526b\_img.jpg\) \*\*arish Website\*\*](#)

## A FEW NOTES & REMINDERS

1. This coming Sunday, from 9-9:40, there will be an ***AED orientation*** meeting held in the church hall. All are welcome and encouraged to participate in this orientation. Look below for more information.

2. Our ***Lenten Spiritual Renewal Sessions*** will begin the week of March 1. The deadline to sign up to participate is this coming **Sunday, February 22**. Look Below for more information.

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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## Lenten Spiritual Renewal Sessions

You are invited to participate in Good Shepherd's annual Lenten Spiritual Renewal Sessions (LSRS). This year we will reflect on the Parables of Jesus. We will learn about the teaching tool that parables are and why Jesus chose to use parables. We will examine four of Jesus' parables, each of which gives us a window into Jesus' message and movement concerning the Kingdom of God. We will put the parables into their historical context and consider what they might mean for us today. There is no book or fee required for these sessions. More information about the sessions will be sent to those who sign-up to participate. These sessions will be offered in a small group format, beginning the week of March 1. There will be three groups, each group will meet for 4 weeks (a total of four sessions), and each session will last up to an hour and a half. There are both in-person and online options. Please fill out the bottom portion of the LSRS information/registration flyer, which can be found in the church and on our church website beginning February 12 ([www.goodshepherdwareham.org](http://www.goodshepherdwareham.org)). Please return the form to the church (there is a LSRS return box in the back of the church) or directly to Pastor Dan ([pastor.dan.bernier@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.dan.bernier@gmail.com)) by **February 22**. Each group will consist of 6 to 10 participants. On the form, please mark each of the sessions that you can be available to participate in. Pastor Dan will be in touch with participants on Sunday afternoon, February 22, to confirm which session you will participate in.

## Why Does the Church Look So Different During Lent?

You may be wondering why so many things in the church are covered with purple cloth, why the large Paschal (Easter) Candle has been removed, and why the church is so simply decorated during Lent. These are visual reminders that we are in the Season of Lent. It is important that we not only "know" that it is Lent, but that we also experience and "feel" it. By simplifying our environment, we send subliminal messages to our hearts and minds that we are in the season of prayer and reflection; during which we are invited to focus our lives more deeply in God's Spirit and to reflect on what we are doing with the gift of our lives. In Lent we are encouraged to deepen our commitment to following The Way that leads to the fullness of life, as Jesus has shown us.

## Why the Pile of Rocks in the Church?

The pile of rocks at the entrance to the altar area of the church serves as a symbol of the burdens/anxieties/fears which distract us and keep us from living fully as God intends for us to live. Beginning the first Sunday of Lent, you are invited to write your life's burdens/anxieties/fears on the purple pieces of paper found at the back and front entrances to the church and place the folded paper onto or between the rocks. This is a way of giving them to God and trusting that God is helping us. On Good Friday the cross will be placed into the rock pile, symbolizing the transformative power of God's Love; that with God's help, our burdens/anxieties/fears can give way to new life. On Easter Sunday and throughout the Easter Season, the rock pile will be replaced by the baptismal font and the Easter Candle, symbolic of our new life in Christ.

## AED Orientation Session Next Sunday

On Sunday, February 22 beginning at 9am, the Red Cross will give us a 40-minute introduction about using the AED. The session will take place in the Church Hall. All are encouraged to participate. The session is designed to take away the mystery of using the AED. Again, the AED device is automated and gives verbal step-by-step instruction for those who are using it.

## Would you like to be Confirmed or Received into the Episcopal Church?

**Confirmation** is the liturgical rite in which a person stands before the Bishop and renews their commitment to follow the Way of Jesus, by renewing their Baptismal Covenant. Today, the Sacrament of Confirmation usually occurs when a person is at least 16 years of age. If you have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation, I would like to encourage you to consider it. I believe that Confirmation is an important sacrament, especially considering that most of us were Baptized at a very young age and were not able to pledge our commitment to follow the Way of Jesus through the Baptismal Covenant. In Confirmation we make the decision for ourselves. We stand before the Bishop and before the Church and say Yes to God and Yes to following the Way of Jesus. If you did receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, but not in the Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Church still recognizes your Confirmation. But I would like to encourage you to consider being formally **Received** into the Communion of the

Episcopal Church. At the Confirmation Service, those who were Confirmed in a non-Episcopal church have the opportunity to acknowledge their desire to follow Jesus by way of the communion of the Episcopal Church. Like those being Confirmed, those being Received renew their commitment to follow the Way of Jesus, by renewing their Baptismal Covenant. ***Please see Pastor Dan if you are interested in either receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation or being Received into the communion of the Episcopal Church.***

### **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.

### **Sunday Flower Donations**

Please consider donating for the purchase of altar flowers for our Sunday Services in memory of deceased loved ones or in thanksgiving of blessings in your life. More information about how this works can be found in the "Sunday Flower Donations" envelopes which are located in the back of the church, and on our "Church of the Good Shepherd Wareham" website. Please check the Sunday Flowers board in the back of the church, or call the parish office (508-295-2840), to determine which upcoming Sundays are available in 2025.

### **Prayer Blanket Ministry**

As a way of reaching out to those who are ill or struggling in some way, parishioners have knitted blankets to be given to those who can benefit from receiving these gifts of warmth and comfort. Pastor Dan blesses each blanket before it is given. He prays that "this mantle be a safe haven...a sacred place of security and well-being...sustaining and embracing in good times as well as difficult ones." Please contact Judy Ellis (Prayer Blanket Ministry Coordinator) or Pastor Dan if you would like a prayer blanket for yourself or someone else. ***If you would like to be a part of this ministry, and join our knitting team, please be in touch with Judy Ellis (508-295-5318).*** There is a very basic pattern that makes beautiful prayer blankets. All patterns, of course, are welcomed. If needed, yarn will be provided. If you would like to support the prayer shawl ministry but do not knit or crochet, ask Judy about a way you can help.

### **Coffee Hour Hosts Needed**

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. Every household is invited to host coffee hour, which follows our 10am Sunday Service. You can host by yourselves or join with another household. Coffee hour hosts are asked to bring a quart size carton of half-n-half, a half-gallon carton of juice, and some snacks to feed 6-8 children and about 30 adults (for example: cake, pastry, cookies, brownies, cheese and crackers, fruit, cut up veggies, etc.). Hosts arrive at the church by 9:15 to set up for coffee hour. Judy Govoni will be there to assist you. Hosts are also asked to clean up after coffee hour. The idea is that each household would host coffee hour about every three or four months. The sign-up list and more information can be found on the food table during coffee hour.

### **Discretionary Fund Donations**

Good Shepherd has a Pastor's Discretionary Fund. It is from the Discretionary Fund that Pastor Dan is able to assist those in need. There are envelopes at the entrances of the church for you to use to make donations to the Discretionary Fund. Place your donations in one of these envelopes and place the envelope in one of the offertory boxes in the church, or you can mail the donation to the church office with a note that the donation is for the Discretionary Fund. Thank you to those who have contributed to the Discretionary Fund over the years. Those who have benefited from your donations are always very grateful.

### **Food Pantry Wish List**

Church of the Good Shepherd is partnering with Damien's Place Food Pantry by provided needed items for those using the pantry. These items are difficult for Damien's to purchase from the Greater Boston Food Bank. Damien's is looking specifically for **cereal, jars of jelly, and juice**. Donations can be left in the baskets in the back of the church on Sunday mornings or dropped off at the Church Office on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9am-1pm. Thank you!

### **Please Help Good Shepherd's Table Serve Our Neighbors**

Every Thursday for the past 25 years, Good Shepherd's Table has served a community meal (4:30pm). We need help with the tasks needed to make this happen and so we have created a monthly sign-up sheet for the tasks each week. No job takes longer than 45 minutes and you can help set up, plate food, serve food, or clean the dining room after the meal. We especially need help cleaning the dining room after the meal. For more details and to sign up, please reach out to Deacon Hilary. You can choose any week you are available. Thank you in advance for your help!

### **Sunday School**

The Good Shepherd Sunday School is held during the first half of our 10am Sunday Service, usually on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month. In February, due to school vacation week, Sunday School will be held on the first two Sundays of the month. The Sunday School is located in the church meeting room, in the office area. All Sunday School volunteers undergo CORI background checks and receive 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 found in the church and can be downloaded from our Good Shepherd website ([www.goodshepherdwareham.org](http://www.goodshepherdwareham.org)). *The next Sunday School Sundays will be March 1 & 15.*

### **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 found in the church and can be downloaded from our Good Shepherd website ([www.goodshepherdwareham.org](http://www.goodshepherdwareham.org)).

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

This is a reminder that if you have or may have covid, the flu, 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. Please stay home, rest, and participate online.

### **Thank You for Your Continued Financial Support**

Thank you to all who are financially supporting Good Shepherd this year, especially those who made pledges for 2025. Our budget operates on a week-to-week basis, so thank you for keeping your pledge payments up to date. If you are behind on your pledge payments, please work to catch them up as you are able. If you are away for an extended amount of time, please consider mailing in your pledge payments. Again, thank you all for your financial support of the mission and ministries of the Church of the Good Shepherd!

### **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."

### **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

### **Wareham Media (WM) Sunday Service Coverage**

Wareham Media, the Wareham local access channel, broadcasts recordings of our Sunday Services. The recorded Services air a week later. WM 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.

### **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.



[Good & Green Team Facebook page](#)



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