



**GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**2024**

**Annual Review**

*and Peeks into Next Financial Year*

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**LOVE. GROW. SERVE.**

**Building up God's people through His word for His world**

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**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**  
**1133 Reston Avenue**  
**Herndon, VA 20170**  
**703-437-5020**  
[www.gslcva.org](http://www.gslcva.org)

**Church Staff**

Senior Pastor	Jotham Johann
Assisting Pastor	Gary James
Business Manager	Georgia Thorstenson
Communications Director	Jeff Donahue
Director of Engagement	Heidi Cooper
Organist/Director of Choirs	Anne Lee
Administrative Assistant	Michele Clair
Community Service Coordinator & Youth Ministry Director	Holly Vanderhoof
Praise Band Director & Video Production Specialist	Matt Hardy
Communications Assistant	Reid Otterbacher
Social Media Assistant	Chloe Vanderhoof
Children's Ministry Coordinator	Michelle Tenhaeff

**Board of Servant Leaders**

Chair	Laura Blackburn
Vice-Chair	Rob Fekete
Secretary	Drew Lipman
Member	Larry Austin
Member	Paul Kasulis
Member	Jennifer Pelletier
Member	Deanine Thrash

**Core Ministry**

Worship	Georgia Thorstenson and Julie Schorfheide
Discipleship	Pastor James
Parish Life	Brian Cors
Mission	Pastor Jotham Johann
Congregational Care & Nurture	June McGurn
Administration	Pastor Johann

**Preschool Staff**

Interim Director	Kathy Otterbacher
Director	Sarah Brazell
Lead Teachers	Barbara Fay Michelle Maher
Assistant Teacher	Judy Kurak
Extended Care Teacher	Kristi Nickerson
Business Manager	Georgia Thorstenson

**Volunteers**

GSLC has been blessed with those who are called to donate their time and talents daily, weekly, and monthly. The list of volunteers is too great to individually recognize everyone; however, every minute of service is greatly appreciated and felt by all.

**Property and Facilities**

Roger Thorstenson

## Introduction

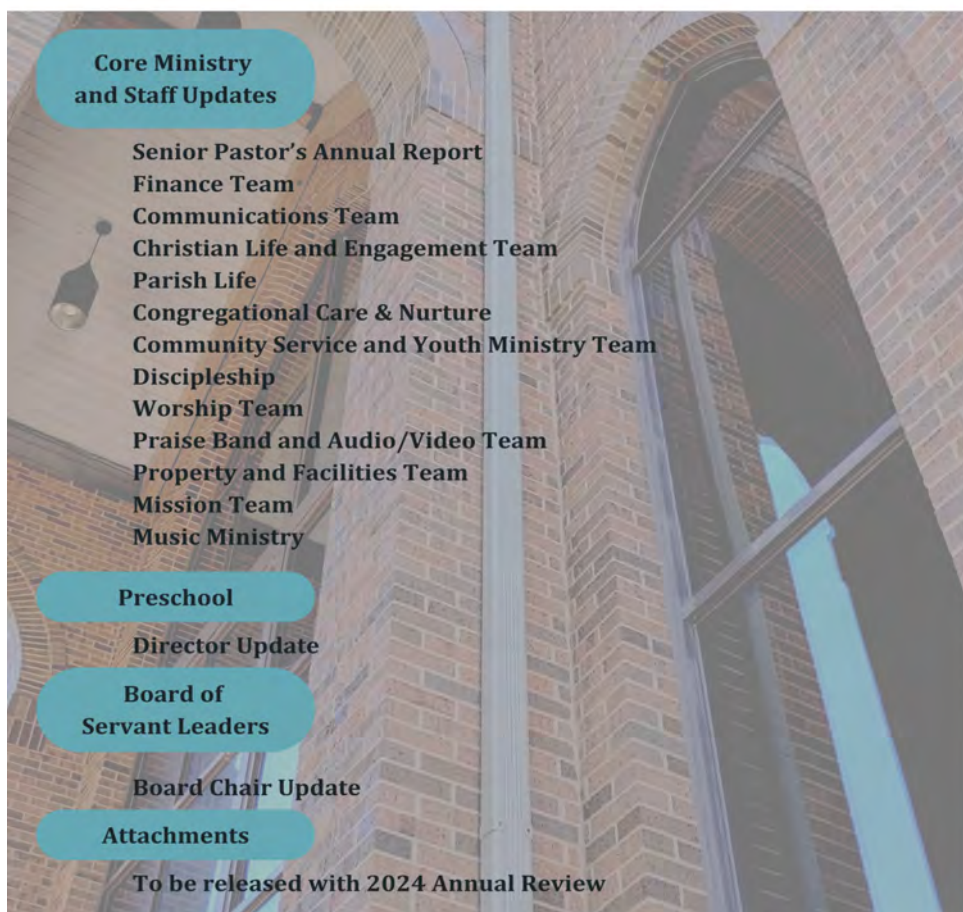
At Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, we share Jesus' love by serving our neighbors; grow in our faith through Bible study, worship, and prayer; and build up one another through connections we make at gatherings, small group meetings, and other events.

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is moving! He is moving in our community, throughout our church, and within the lives of so many. Through the following updates from our Core Ministry leaders and staff members, we see how He is moving in our own lives, and how we ignite those around us by telling the Good News in a way that is tangible and relatable.

During Fiscal Year 2024, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (GSLC) made an effort to further transparency, provide timely updates from core ministry areas and staff, and show the current status of functional budgetary needs and expenditures. This "2024 Annual Review and Peeks into Next Financial Year" provides an initial recap of FY 2024, and a look forward into FY 2025. The final version will be released upon completion of FY 2024 with additional budgetary information and attendance figures as attachments.

# Contents

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Photographs of GSLC in this review by Myra Niemeier

## Senior Pastor's Annual Report

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Grace to you and Peace from God our loving Father, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and our Comforter and Counselor the Holy Spirit! Amen.

As we close out another financial year, we're grateful to God that:

- Our in-person weekly worship attendance has grown to about 85% of pre-pandemic in-person attendance (low-200s).
- Our online worship attendance (which was non-existent pre-pandemic) is robust, with members, visitors, and others joining us. We estimate that about 400-500 people tune in, weekly. God has afforded us the giftedness and technology to reach so many more people with the Gospel across our many electronic platforms: YouTube, FBLive, Vimeo, Facebook, and Instagram.
- We've completed the audio and visual systems overhaul and been blessed by them. This overhaul now includes the narthex (entryway) with the two large screens and the audio upgrade.
- We have added more members this year and an additional group will be gathering for a Connections Class early in the next year. First-time guests and returning guests visit us every Sunday. Our engagement team, led by Heidi Cooper, as well as the plastic nametags and on-line pictorial directory, continue to help raise the ease of meeting and greeting and increase our "friendliness factor."
- We've markedly increased our events during this past year, including special Bible studies, a volunteer appreciation gathering, group health-walks on trails, etc.
- We are celebrating yet another year of being financially strong and faithful: continuing to drive down the debt on our property while funding sizeable mission and outreach projects through the Above and Beyond giving program and other directed giving.
- As we've been sharing, our next significant overhauls to this house of our Lord in the years to come will be of the HVAC system and the roof, which have already begun with the installation of new boilers during last year's summer.
- We're grateful to God for the steps He's allowed us to take in the expansion of our ministry to young children and their families through the preschool: securing a new preschool director who is starting her ministry with us in August; finalizing the thumbs-up from the county for our 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. care of preschool-age kids, starting mid-2025; as well as providing funding for this expanded program, as it continues to transition from a 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. program to an extended-day ministry. With the leadership of a new Child Ministry Coordinator, Michelle Tenhaeff, we're continuing to increase the vibrancy of our child Sunday School program. In addition, the number of confirmands for this coming year's confirmation program has increased.
- In the core ministry area of Congregational Care and Nurture, the dementia care initiative has been established and is continuing to grow. In addition, a blood drive and a marriage workshop are planned.

## Senior Pastor's Annual Report (continued)

- A committee has continued to conduct planning on the Columbarium Project and the congregation will be presented with a proposal during the August 25 Assembly for consideration.

The following is what I shared in my report of last summer and their statuses:

- We are planning (feasibility studies, discussions, etc.) in the next FY and beyond for these **possible** initiatives within 2-5 years:
- Extension of preschool operations from 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Discipleship) – **In progress (actual new operations to begin in summer/fall of 2025)**
- Overhaul of the HVAC systems and roof (Administration/Property) – **In progress (added boilers and other minor items)**
- Parish Nurse (Congregational Care) – **Discussions & Research have begun.**
- After-School program for kids older than preschool age (Discipleship & Parish Life) – **Pending**
- Family Ministry (Discipleship/Parish Life) - **Pending**
- Addition of 3<sup>rd</sup> indoor service – praise service every Sunday (Worship) - **Pending**
- **Other long-term initiatives are being considered.**

I will stop here, as you'll read the reports and plans from our capable and faithful staff and ministry leaders in the pages to come. Please excuse us for any redundancies in our enthusiasm for the ministry of our Lord.

In addition to our thanksgiving for His blessings upon our past financial year, we ask our Lord of Mission to bless our efforts and provide us wisdom and encouragement during this important, coming year!

Serving with you,



Jotham Johann  
Senior Pastor



## Finance

The GSLC 2024 fiscal year (FY) runs from September 1, 2023, through August 31, 2024. The voter-approved FY 2024 budget planned for General Fund income from all sources of about \$1.178M and as of July 31, 2024, our FY 2024 income from all sources is \$1.04M. Actual Expenses as of July 31, 2024, for FY 2024 are \$1.048M. Regular mortgage principal and special mortgage principal contributions have reduced the mortgage principal to \$1.20M as of the end of FY 2024 (August 31, 2024).

Since the beginning of FY 2018, the mortgage principal has been reduced by more than \$2M. The expenses incurred in FY 2024 have exceeded the total income resulting in a negative balance as of July 31, 2024, of income minus expenses of \$8,118. This negative balance was covered from reserves. At the end of FY 2024 there are adequate reserve funds available to maintain the mandated two months operating expenses, the dedicated accounts, the Above & Beyond accounts, and the normal operating expenses.

**Mortgage Balance has decreased by +\$2M over 5 years**



As the building ages we are beginning to experience major system replacement costs. Maintenance of high cost building systems (HVAC, boilers and water heater systems) continues to require funding and is addressed on a planned schedule. It is important to recognize the considerable amount of volunteer hours that are donated by the members of the congregation. Without this generous contribution of their time

GSLC would not be able to provide the broad range of services and support that are delivered to the GSLC membership, the local community, and our worldwide community.

Georgia Thorstenson – Business Manager  
Arlisa Ferrara – Financial Secretary  
Finance Team Leader - Michael DeWan

## Communications

FY 2024 was a significant year for Good Shepherd and our digital messaging and communication reach. Through the usage of our social media, recorded, podcast, and



livestream platforms GSLC maintained a consistent standard of quality with only 2 service availability interruptions out of over 92 total offerings. These service interruptions were noted with each service release and did not affect the overall viewing quality. This, in no small part, was due to

technology and hardware upgrades implemented throughout the year executed in conjunction with the Audio/Video Team. Furthermore, the reach of our virtual services, Bible studies, and myriad other faith and fellowship offerings showed continued growth from the prior year (FY 2023) with additional opportunities presented through the Christian life and Engagement Team and Parish Life.

FY 2024 also saw growth in our social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) due to the efforts of our Social Media Assistant, Chloe Vanderhoof. Her efforts to date have increased our views to more than 1500 people monthly and increased our reach by nearly 30% when compared to the previous year. Targeted advertisement and post pushing campaigns, directed at both the church and unchurched audiences, aided in this growth. Going forward, additional posts will be pushed as usage of this paid advertisement tool has increased viewership and awareness of services between 200% and 300%, as seen with the Easter service reaching over 500 viewers, Christmas Eve service reaching over 800 viewers, and our Thanksgiving Eve service reaching over 1200 viewers. Each of these services can be viewed on our livestream/recorded service platforms (Vimeo, YouTube, or Facebook Live), which is currently being chronologically categorized for easier access to all services.

FY 2024 also marked the departure of Communications Assistant Abbey Panetti, and the successful transition to our new Communications Assistant, Reid Otterbacher. Reid has taken over Abbey's responsibilities of updating and maintaining our website, as well as creating all worship service slides. Before her departure, Abbey completed the refresh of the Good Shepherd website (<https://www.gslcva.org>). This new site features modernized visuals, organized subpages, a more user-friendly layout, greater use of congregational event photos, and a more robust online calendar. Her work has increased website traffic by more than 45% and garnered positive feedback from both members and guests alike. This effort was made possible through the generous contributions to the Above & Beyond website refresh project, and we are deeply grateful for their generosity as we continue to spread His Word.



## Communications (continued)

The Communications Team has continued its focus on maintaining a regular email schedule to over 480 contacts, reflecting an overall growth of approximately 8%. Across hundreds of sent emails, the open rate has been sustained at 53%, which is well above industry averages for churches of similar size. A key reason for the success of our open rate is the usage of photographs of the church and congregational events for our correspondence and reports.



The focus for Communications at GSLC for FY 2025 is to maintain our current technological platform for livestream and recorded services, with targeted upgrades.



These upgrades will focus on the Praise/contemporary service, with upgrades to the lighting and layout of the stage, funded through the Above & Beyond program, and the usage of an additional camera view. Additionally, our print and email correspondence will emphasize increased use of the church website (<https://www.gslcva.org>).

The recent website revamp allows church events to be filtered and categorized on our online calendar, ensuring that members and visitors have timely and efficient access to relevant event information, providing another effective tool for delivering information.

Jeff Donahue – Communications Director  
Reid Otterbacher – Communications Assistant  
Chloe Vanderhoof – Social Media Assistant



## Christian Life and Engagement

FY 2024 saw the continued growth of activities at Good Shepherd. These activities provided an opportunity for fellowship for members and guests, being well attended and enjoyed by all. A summary of several of these events is as follows:

- Two Connections Classes were held:
  - The first in September 2023 for 15 new members, who were welcomed into the congregation on December 4.
  - The second in April with 17 new members welcomed on June 23 with a food truck following the service.

- The annual Good Shepherd Oktoberfest and Trunk-or-Treat was held on October 22, with about 75 people participating.



- The Good Shepherd annual Women's Retreat was held on November 10-12, led by author and speaker Donna Snow, with 50 women attending.

- The Ladies Advent Tea expanded and became the Women's Potluck Advent Lunch. The lunch was held on December 9, with 25 ladies attending.

- Chili Bingo was held February 2 with 100+ people in attendance and multiple chili cooks entered into the Good Shepherd chili contest, with the local fire station in attendance.



- Appreciation Sunday was held on March 17 with 100+ people attending. In order to honor our many volunteers that make Good Shepherd so special.

- A farewell reception was held for Dan LaMaestra on May 5, following both services.

- A women's book club discussion and luncheon was held August 11, with 25 women participating.

- A bus for a trip to see "Daniel" at the Sight and Sound Theater was fully funded through Above & Beyond, with the event set for October 25 (in the upcoming fiscal year).



Upcoming events this year include: Connections Class, Oktoberfest, the Women's Retreat, and Chili Bingo. In addition, we will have special anniversary celebrations for Holly Vanderhoof (10 years) and Georgia Thorstenson (30 Years).

Heidi Cooper  
Christian Life and Engagement Team

## Parish Life

Parish Life at Good Shepherd is focused on engaging all people in meaningful activities of learning and discipleship, increasing and growing in our faith, our relationship with God and with each other.

Through Life Groups, Bible studies, and fellowship activities, Good Shepherd offers a number of avenues to connect in the Word and with each other. Examples of Parish Life and Bible studies can be seen below, with fellowship activities seen in the previous ministry area (Christian Life and Engagement):

**Manic Mondays** led by Brian and Sally Cors: Our attendance ranges from 8-17. We have 2 social events each year, Christmas and Summer parties. And we serve at The Hypothermia Shelter 1 or 2 times each winter. In FY 2024, we studied *The Christ Key*. And this coming year, we will study *Heaven*.



**Men's Group** led by Randy Terlecki: Approximately 6-20 men participated in each event. We had a Monthly Men's Breakfast every 2nd Saturday at the Coffee House at Lake Anne, held marksmanship events, visited multiple breweries, and took a docent-led tour of Reston Lake Anne Museum and hike. General plans for FY 2025 include the monthly breakfasts, shooting range visits, brewery visits, a Men's Retreat with speaker, billiard nights, a visit to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, baseball games or other sport events, and possibly sponsor a Corn Roast at the church.



**Word Workers** led by Melinda DeWan: We started with 17 people and dwindled to about 9. We met for 15 sessions of an hour and a half each with an average attendance of 10-12 people. We studied *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis using the study guide by Alan Vermilye. We held no special events, and we met virtually. We will meet in FY 2025 for 15 sessions and expect to have 9-10 participants, studying the CPH *God's Word for Today 1 Corinthians*, and then *2 Corinthians*.



## Parish Life (continued)

**Thursday Morning Ladies Bible Study** led by Vicki Peter: Vicki describes her group as such: Sisters in Christ meeting weekly, caring for one another and studying God's word, with a field trip or 2! There are 15 women who meet weekly for a Bible study. Field trips included a baseball game, Stations of the Cross before Easter and a luncheon in the spring to wrap up the year.

**Friday Morning Men's Breakfast** led by Jeff Kroese: This group has met weekly through the year, averaging 6-8 attendees. For the past few years, we've been basing our studies on the weekly Lutheran Hour sermons. We use the sermon scripture references and base the discussion on the sermon and sermon notes, with plans to continue into FY 2025.

**Young adults** led by John Purtilo: We had six participants in the group last year, studying the Augsburg Confession. This year, we did a study on comparative world religions that's coming to a close. Going forward we're about to begin a new study/discussion on the origins of the Bible. At the start of the school year last year, we held a cookout at one member's townhouse in Sterling. This year, we intend to continue to meet and maintain the cadence. We'd like to send out an email blast/reminder to young adults that we meet when we do and that folks are welcome to participate.

Brian Cors  
Parish Life Team

## Congregational Care and Nurture

The Congregational Care and Nurture Team (CC&N), comprising more than sixty-six volunteers, has helped support the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health of the congregation through devotional literature and opportunities to serve others at Good Shepherd. This ministry supports memorial services and organizes memorial receptions, member care visits, and transportation. *Portals of Prayer* booklets and various care ministry pamphlets, found in the narthex (church entryway) and admin wing foyer, are part of the CC&N budget; so is Taking Faith Home, the weekly handout available at the welcome center and through the weekly eblast. Four volunteers send more than 700 greeting cards for life events annually, plus mementos for Baptisms.



The Take Them A Meal team brings/sends meals to the ill, infirm, and their families, as well as families with newborn babies. Lead Caroline Ruppap found and set up the *Take Them A Meal* app and ran the ministry for five years; we thank her for her service. Anyone who might be interested in leading this ministry should contact June McGurn.

Since May 2020, the GSLC Prayer Team has been hosting a weekly video-teleconference prayer gathering on Wednesday evenings. During these video-teleconference sessions members have lifted prayers for members of the church, family and friends, as well as for those in our nation and beyond. The prayer gathering is attended by approximately 15 members.

CC&N supported the two Saturday Bible Studies. No speaker fees were involved but lunches were provided for the total of 44 attendees. We hope to be able to support additional Saturday Bible Studies and a family- or marriage-related event in 2025. Two *Walk in the World of Dementia* workshops were conducted during FY 2024 for a total of 19 congregation members, and the CPR class saw 12 ushers and others trained in CPR and the use of AED (defib) machines. We will continue to arrange these classes as interest and demand suggest.

CC&N focused on improved health through the Walks and Hikes ministry (Jeannie Johns, lead). Jeannie and her team led a total of 76 walkers/hikers through Seneca Regional Park, the Winter Walk of Lights at Meadowlark Gardens, and a bluebell walk at Bull Run Regional Park; a customizable walk around Lake Anne is planned for August 18 to close out fiscal year 2024. Plans for FY 2025 include repeating the Winter Walk of Lights, family/stroller-friendly walks, and additional hikes, as well as walks for those who are unable to walk very far or in inclement weather. Also in FY 2025, CC&N will request donations of medical equipment (canes, walkers, shower chairs, etc.) no longer in use, and introduce a lending bank of medical equipment for the congregation.

## **Congregational Care and Nurture (continued)**

The CC&N teams maintain rosters of those willing to help in all the activities listed above. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact June McGurn.

June McGurn  
Congregational Care and Nurturing Team



## Community Service

Community Service at Good Shepherd has continued to help people in our community. We work with various local organizations that provide support for those with food insecurity, homelessness, and various other needs among those living below the poverty line. Our partners include South Lakes High School Food Pantry, Cornerstones, The Closet of Greater Herndon, and Fellowship Square.

Our main initiative is hosting the South Lakes High School (SLHS) Food Pantry 52 weeks a year. Good Shepherd began hosting the pantry during the COVID pandemic in April of 2020. A new stream of curbside distribution to families each week has organically grown and continues to be a strong need to the SLHS Pyramid school families. On average we distribute approximately 400,000 pounds of food each year or 200 tons of food to families in need! We have numerous volunteers who support pantry operations at Good Shepherd, including food intake, sorting, packing, and distribution to the families at SLHS throughout the week. In FY 2024, more than 1,400 volunteers provided over 7,000 volunteer hours between congregants and the community were spent at the pantry! This year the pantry has surpassed distributing TWO MILLION POUNDS of food and toiletries to children and families in need in our community!



Through our partnership with the SLHS Food Pantry we also supported the Do it Your Way 0.5k, their only organized fundraiser during the year. Last year we had more than 30 people join our team from Good Shepherd and hope to have even more this year. With



multiple churches, community businesses and individual donations, the pantry was able to raise more than \$40,000! Other Good Shepherd initiatives include meal and food support for the North County Hypothermia Shelter (December through March) through the Fairfax County Hypothermia Prevention Program. Since 2005, the Fairfax

County Hypothermia Prevention Program has prevented death and serious injuries among the county's most vulnerable residents by ensuring that no one must sleep outside during the winter months. Since 2011, Good Shepherd has participated weekly as part of the County's North Fairfax location access provided by Cornerstones. Every Wednesday from the beginning of December through the end of March (17 weeks), we prepare, provide, and serve hot meals for 25 guests.

We also provide grocery gift cards to Lake Anne Fellowship House, Fellowship Square, Cornerstones, Dogwood Elementary and the South Lakes High School Food Pantry.

In addition to supporting food insecurity through the SLHS Food Pantry we also pack 100 after school grocery packs for Dranesville Elementary once a month throughout the school year. These grocery packs provide food that kids can fix themselves over the

## Community Service (continued)

weekend. We are also involved with Helping Hungry Kids with their weekend grocery pack program which supports multiple schools as needed.

Seasonal drives include meals for Thanksgiving through Cornerstones, and Angel Trees for Cornerstones and Lake Anne House (formerly Lake Anne Fellowship House).

This year we were able to bring in Meals of Hope for a congregational wide meal packing event where we packed approximately 12,000 meals that went to local pantries. We are looking forward to bringing more congregation-wide service projects including meal packing events, lunches and after-school bags for Embry Rucker Shelter among others.



Join us as Good Shepherd Community Service continues to show God's love in action through service to others in need.

Holly Vanderhoof  
Community Service and Youth Ministry Team

## Discipleship

The Learning and Discipleship ministry is dedicated to providing the necessary resources for the Good Shepherd education and youth programs. Included are the costs to provide curriculum and supplies for the Sunday School program, ages 3 years old through 6<sup>th</sup> grade; middle school ministry, grades 7-8; and high school, grades 9-12. Additional funds are budgeted to cover the cost of basic materials for the Adult Bible studies bearing in mind that study guides and books are provided assuming that class members will reimburse the church for the books. Resources are also budgeted to provide class materials, catechisms, and Bibles, as well supplies to cover special events related to the Confirmation and First Communion programs, along with vibrant middle and high school youth ministry programs (retreats and fundraising functions).

The **Children's Sunday School** program saw significant growth during the FY 2024 school year. Average attendance doubled over the year, attributed in large part to the addition of the Children's Ministry Coordinator position. A cadre of 6 volunteer teachers shared the love of Jesus using Spark curriculum which corresponds with the Revised Common Lectionary (Sunday morning readings). Lesson activities regularly included reading the Bible story, crafts, and games with the goal of teaching Jesus Loves You! The program also included a Christmas Program for families and friends, along with multiple service projects: South Lakes Food Pantry, Embry Rucker Bagged Lunches, and the Big Serve Sunday. Budgeted funds for the 2024-25 Sunday School program, in addition to providing curriculum and supplies, will fund expenses focused on attendance growth and a broader spectrum of service projects throughout the year.

The **Confirmation Class** for the 2023-24 school year included nine 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Five members of the class were confirmed in May 2024. The confirmation curriculum is traditionally focused on the Old and New Testaments; the Creeds; the 10 Commandments; and the Lord's prayer, while meeting once a month. Confirmands are required to develop and present to the congregation a personal faith statement. Budgeted funds for the 2024-25 class will be used for the purchase of class materials: Luther's small Catechism (to be reimbursed by attendees); Bibles; and The Lutheran Handbook. Additionally, plans for 2024-25 include a small number of class teambuilding events; the confirmation rehearsal dinner; confirmation gifts; and class supplies.

The **First Communion Class** included five 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders who received their First Communion on Maundy Thursday 2024. The curriculum for First Communion centers on the meaning and grace given gift of the Lord's Supper according to Lutheran doctrine and practices. Budgeted funds are used to purchase class materials and supplies as well as gifts for those completing the class.



## Discipleship (continued)

**Vacation Bible School (VBS)** at Good Shepherd was a major success this year with just over 90 kids attending. Teen and adult volunteers helped decorate, led rotations and crews for a high energy week where kids dove into a friendship with God and learned that God is a friend to everyone - “Thanks God!” This is one of the biggest outreach ministries to the community as approximately 75% of attendees (volunteers included) are not Good Shepherd members.



**The Middle School Sunday School and Ministry** saw significant growth and participation in 2023-24 due to the dedicated efforts of the Youth Ministry Director and member volunteers. Our Middle School Ministry (MSM) relaunched in the spring! In addition to meeting weekly for Sunday School, our middle schoolers participated in the first middle school gathering in several years. The SED Middle School Gathering was at King of Glory Lutheran Church in Williamsburg, Virginia. Kids had a great time with programs, worship, fellowship and games with more than two hundred other middle schoolers throughout the Southeastern District. Getting kids connected at this age outside of Confirmation has been a challenge but we are happy to see connections being made and a growing program.

**The High School Sunday School and Youth Ministry (HSM)** program was vivacious and active this year. Students met weekly through Sunday School during the school year and at HSM gatherings twice a month which included the SED Fall High School Youth Gathering, the Great Pumpkin Hunt, Friendsgiving, A Very Merry HSM Christmas Party and so much more. The youth actively fundraised for workcamp through weekly donut offerings, Christkindlmarket, Chili Bingo, and the Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast.

HSM joined Group Mission Trips and twenty other churches throughout the country in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, in July. Three hundred and eighty campers were divided into sixty-four crews that worked on forty-nine homes and completed fifty projects. More than eleven thousand hours of service were completed with projects that included wheelchair ramps, decks, stairs, painting, and so much more. With hard work and prayer, we were able to overcome many roadblocks and complete almost all the projects! Our youth were also very fortunate to have the opportunity to take an afternoon sail with Maritime Ministries and hear about their mission to reach areas that are not accessible by plane to spread the word of God. Workcamp is truly a transformational event for the residents, teens, and adults too!

## Discipleship (continued)

word of God. Workcamp is truly a transformational event for the residents, teens, and adults too!

**The Adult Bible Study** program consisted of two classes on Sunday morning and two other weekly Bible studies. Total attendance for the two Sunday Bible study classes averaged 25-30 members each Sunday. One of the Sunday morning programs is a Women's Bible study led by Heidi Cooper. The other Sunday morning Bible study focused on the core of Lutheran theology and Biblical events. The Sunday Adult Bible Study, headed by Pastor James, is led by 3 member volunteers. The one Sunday Adult Bible study continued to meet throughout the summer.

Additionally, as part of the adult education program, two 6-hour Saturday Bible studies were held and received excellent reviews. Plans for the upcoming educational calendar include scheduling as many as one a quarter Saturday Bible Study events. The program for these events will focus on broader Biblical and theological issues the church encounters in today's society. Funds will be used for supplies and materials/curriculum for these events.

Pastor Gary James, Holly Vanderhoof; Michelle Tenhaeff  
Discipleship Team



## Worship

During FY 2024, Good Shepherd continued to offer numerous ways to worship: traditional and Matins settings in the sanctuary and Praise/contemporary services in the Fellowship Hall; “family focused” services on Christmas Eve and Easter; livestreaming and recording one service each week; midweek Lenten services; and additional services for Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday.



This year saw the departure of Dan LaMaestra, who served many years as Good Shepherd’s Praise Band director and as the audio engineer behind our livestream services, recorded services, and podcasts. His expertise was invaluable in our multi-year project to improve our audio systems in the sanctuary and the Fellowship Hall.

Here is a brief list of highlights from this year:

- Reintroduced passing of offering plates during the offering moment of worship services.
- Undertook efforts to recruit and train worship assistants.
- Added Bibles to each row of pews (in hymnal racks).
- Continued the “family focused” Christmas Eve service and added a “family focused” service on Easter morning.
- Held midweek Lenten services at noon, with recordings released by early evening.
- Welcomed youth as worship assistants/worship leaders at two services this year (thanks to the leadership of Pastor James and Holly Vanderhoof for making this happen).
- Purchased additional artificial floral arrangements to supplement fresh flowers that are “sponsored” by members to mark notable occasions. These arrangements appear on either side of the pulpit each week.
- Added a banner hanger in the hallway leading to the Fellowship Hall.
- Completed essential repairs on the organ.

### *Looking ahead to FY 2025*

We are excited to welcome Matt Hardy as our new Praise Band director. Matt has been (and will continue to be) our Video Production Specialist. Beginning in September, we will be able to enjoy Matt’s musical talents as he brings his vision to our contemporary worship services on the second and fourth Sundays of each month (11:00 a.m., in the Fellowship Hall).

## Worship (continued)

Other plans for the upcoming year include:

- Organ and Trumpet Concert, September 15.
- A service of Lessons and Carols during Advent.
- Upgrade the welcome area for Praise/contemporary worship services.
- Continuation of midday, midweek Lenten services and of the family focused services on Christmas Eve and Easter.



Julie Schorfheide  
and Georgia Thorstenson  
Worship Team

## Praise Band and Audio/Video Production

This past year several technical upgrades were put into place in order to improve the reliability of the livestream service; maintaining our lowest livestream failure rate since we began during the pandemic. The Audio/Video Production team, worship team, and church leaders continue to audition Audio engineers for the vacancy left by Dan LaMaestra.



In addition to the livestream technology upgrades Good Shepherd has modernized the technology used to send video to various locations in the church, allowing display of the worship service, announcement slides, or videos to the narthex, Fellowship Hall and Parent's Room. We completed the hanging of new microphones in the choir loft as well as the TVs in the narthex. These continue to provide us with beautiful music recordings and a more immersive livestream experience.



As Matt Hardy steps into his new role as Praise Band Director, he plans to integrate new and refreshing music along with updated visual elements to the service. Matt will continue to welcome requests from the congregation in his new role!



Going forward in FY 2025 we look forward to installing and implementing the recently funded Above & Beyond items to elevate both the in-person and livestream worship experience for the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.

Matt Hardy  
Praise Band and Audio/Video Production Team

## Property and Facilities

During FY 2024, Good Shepherd's Property and Facilities Team made numerous enhancements and repairs to the building and grounds to improve support for worship, ministry teams, and day-to-day operations of the church and preschool. The many accomplishments of the team can be seen through the following update:



**Information Technology (IT) systems:** Only minor enhancements to the IT



capabilities of Good Shepherd were necessary during FY 2024. Specifically the WIFI was extended on the first floor to provide connectivity in the proximity of the boiler room and also to enable connection to 2 new security cameras that were installed behind the preschool area. The IT support contract with Dataprise that was established during the previous year served the office staff well throughout the year.

**HVAC systems:** The HVAC upgrades completed during the previous year performed well during FY24. The new Lochinvar boilers kept the building warm throughout the winter without incident. Future upgrades to the AC portions of the HVAC system are planned to be implemented in phases in the future. Air Handling Unit (AHU)-5, which provides heating and cooling for the music room, experienced a failure of the supply fan motor requiring it to be replaced.

**Building functionality, safety, and comfort:** One section of roof above the sanctuary and the adjacent flashing were repaired and due to weather damage. The interior flood control measures implemented on the lower level of the building during FY 2023 performed successfully throughout the year. However, the playground still experienced excessive water pooling. This was addressed this FY through installation of additional gutters and downspouts. The water from these downspouts will be diverted away from the building and playground by drainage tubing that will be installed in early FY 2025.

The mold abatement measures that were implemented in the sanctuary in FY 2023 kept the mold problem from reappearing in FY 2024. High humidity in the sanctuary continues to be an issue during the hot and humid summer months.



## Property and Facilities (continued)

Building security was further improved behind the preschool area this FY through installation of 2 additional security cameras that provide video coverage of this area.



The air compressor that pressurizes the dry portion of the firemain was replaced during this FY due to failure of the motor.

The appearance of the preschool area was improved by repainting of the hallway. Sunday school classroom 108 was also repainted. Also the preschool hallway drinking fountain was modified to include a bottle refilling station.

**Grounds:** Improvements to the GSLC grounds included removal of dead trees, several repairs to the perimeter fence, repairs to the electrical controls of the irrigation system, and replacement of the photoelectric sensors that control exterior lighting.



Thanks to the many volunteers who have helped control operating costs by assisting with scaffolding, repairing doors, patching drywall, replacing light fixtures, repairing plumbing leaks and many other tasks too numerous to mention. Collectively, the contributions of time by the volunteers saved the church significant funds and greatly enhanced the safety, comfort, and functionality of the facility and grounds.

Roger Thorstenson  
Property and Facilities Team



## Mission

Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Mission activities focused on allocating and executing Good Shepherd budgeted and Above and Beyond (A&B) funds to promote national and international mission-related outreach efforts.

The Good Shepherd Mission Team began the year by reviewing legacy outreach efforts to determine if funds were still needed going forward and if so, if they should remain a priority for Good Shepherd. We validated that all but one budget line item (missionary returned to the US) were still needed and secured Mission Team approval to support them in 2024. With one item removed, we proposed a new line item to support the Fraher family (past GSLC members) who recently relocated to Kenya to support expansion of the Mustard Seed project. GSLC provided \$3,000 in budgeted funds to the Fraher family and an additional \$2,500 in A&B funds. The Mission Team leveraged the A&B Catalog again for other budgeted line items we felt could use additional funding (e.g., Iglesia Luterana Principe de Paz receiving \$2,000 in budgeted funds and \$2,500 in A&B funds). Other International mission areas GSLC supported include two Africa missionaries, Bethania Kids, Food for the Poor, and World Vision.



For US Mission Support, GSLC provided funding to Lutheran Braille Workers, Evergreen Lutheran School, Samaritan's Purse, Alaska Mission for Christ, and Mid-Atlantic Lutherans in Mission.

In FY 2024, GSLC maintained its support to LCMS Southeastern District by distributing \$25,000 over the course of the year. In addition to the \$17,225 for International Mission support and \$7,000 for US Mission Support, GSLC provided \$5,000 to Lutheran World Relief in budgeted funds and an additional \$5,000 in A&B funds. We also funded Helping Hands \$723 to pay for quilting materials.



At the close of FY 2024, all A&B Catalog items have been fully funded (Faith Aid in Kenya - Fraher family support: \$2,500 and Mustard Seed House: \$5,000, Iglesia Luterana Principe de Paz: \$2,500, Lutheran World Relief: \$5,000, and The Good Seed Company: \$3,000). The Good Seed Company is a new 2024 Catalog item and focuses on translating the Bible into languages where the Bible is not available.

Bill and Lisa Schuler  
Mission Team

## Music Ministry

We had a very blessed year in the music ministry and with the choirs. Both the sanctuary choir and the men' choir have expanded and gained new members. Updates for each choir can be seen below.

### Sanctuary choir:

- Hired three full-time section leaders who have been fantastic additions to the choir.
  - As a plus one of the section leaders volunteered to ring the bell choir, adding to the depth of our music ministry.
- The addition of brass players has been a welcome addition. On several occasions, to include principal festivals, Good Shepherd has been blessed to add brass and string musicians to the sanctuary choir.
  - During principal festivals (e.g.; Christmas and Easter) Good Shepherd has been able to include a Brass Quintet and a timpani player.

### Men's Choir:

- During the summer of 2023 and 2024, about 17 men from the congregation were willing to join the choir and create a men's choir. This wonderful group has sung the anthem for several services during the summer. Although this group does not sing regularly, this has been a great additional choir for GSLC.

### Handbell Choir:

- The handbell choir has two new members joining them to ring the bells. They have covered not only the prelude for both services but the anthem as well.

Looking to the future we will be working on recruiting additional choir members. Volunteers willing to sing are a blessing for Good Shepherd. As an example we were fortunate to have Rose Austin, a youth singer, perform an anthem as a soloist. The addition of a youth handbell choir or youth choir is currently being evaluated. Finally, an Organ and Trumpet Duo Concert will be held on Sunday, September 15, at 1:30 p.m., and will be the first concert since the pandemic.



Anne Lee  
Organist and Director of Choirs

## Good Shepherd Lutheran School

Good Shepherd Lutheran School has served as a ministry of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church since 1981, providing a Christ-centered education for preschool children ages 2 ½ to 5 and Christian outreach to the community. Our students include children of the congregation, children of other Christian congregations, and children from families

who claim no faith community. Our program welcomes and celebrates the individual development of all children spiritually, emotionally, socially, educationally, and physically as they learn and play in Jesus' love.



Our half-day preschool, 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., expanded hours this last school year to



include an extended care program from 12:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. The preschool had two classes meeting three and five days per week, with the extended care being offered four days per week meeting the needs of our current families. The school year ran September 5 through May 24. We also offered a two-week morning Summer Camp (June 3-14) for our current families, and most students attended.

**Staffing:** During the first half of the school year, we had two Lead Teachers, two Assistant Teachers, and an Extended Care staff member, in addition to our Director and Bookkeeper. In mid-December, we received resignations from the Director, one of two Lead Teachers, one of two Assistant Teachers, and the Extended Care staff member. We started January still having two classes. We moved the classes to adjoining classrooms, still having two Lead Teachers, as the remaining Assistant Teacher became a Lead Teacher 3 days per week. We hired one floating Assistant Teacher (a church member) who would go between the two classrooms as needed. All these changes continued to satisfy all Virginia staff-student ratio requirements. We hired a new Extended Care staff member (also a church member) and had two church member volunteers assist. As a church member, I volunteered to be the interim Preschool Director, beginning in December 2023, and agreeing to serve until a replacement was found. All new staff and volunteers received the background and health checks required by the Virginia Department of Education. A new Director was hired and began mid-August 2024. We also continued to have the same bookkeeper on staff. In Spring, six of our seven staff and volunteers completed First Aid and CPR training, as it is required every two years.

## Good Shepherd Lutheran School (continued)

Pastor Johann served as our preschool Executive Leader. He and Pastor James each led



chapel sessions once per month. The preschool director and one other staff member led Chapel the remaining sessions. Our School Advisory Team was made up of two church members and one current preschool parent who is also a church member. The Team supported the preschool ministry focusing on current policies, staff issues, and future needs. Another church preschool parent has agreed to serve. The preschool also received a large amount of volunteer assistance from the GSLC Property Team. needs. The Team met several times during

the year. In December, one of the Team members resigned. This vacancy was filled in the Spring. During the summer, our preschool parent position was vacated after 10 years of service by this volunteer.

**Expansion:** As the first phase of our planned expansion of hours for the preschool, we began offering Lunch Bunch (12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.) and Extended Care (1:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.) in Fall 2023. These programs were used by 30% of the student population. In July 2024, Fairfax County gave us the approval to extend our hours (7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.), which will allow us to provide before and after care hours. We are currently looking at any staff policies and benefits that may need to be adjusted due to the longer hours and larger staff needs, as well as any related additional expenses.

**Marketing:** There has been continued activity to market the preschool to help increase student numbers. A team of church members was created which developed a letter sent to 36 churches without a preschool and within a 5-mile radius of our preschool. The letter included a supply of flyers inviting them to an open house that was held in Spring 2024. This effort was unsuccessful. We are looking into offering more summer camp options during the summer of 2025 and opening them to the entire community. We hope this will bring more families into our facility and lead to increased school-year attendance, especially with the extended hours. Another team of church members is working on additional ideas to market our preschool, including Google search priority placement, Google and Facebook ads, and website enhancements.





## Good Shepherd Lutheran School (continued)

We plan to add more photos and a short video, which is in progress, to the website soon. We also plan to have all registration information for 2025 summer camps and the 2025-2026 school year on the website by end of January 2025.

**Facility:** Several projects are being worked on in the playground area. To combat the problem of the playground flooding during heavy rains, more eaves and drainage spouts are being added to that area. Next, mulch on the playground, added as required over many years, has accumulated to the point that the top layer of mulch needs to be disposed of, and replaced by a new, smaller layer. The rising mulch levels have also caused certain parts of the playground fence boards to start rotting, and these need to be replaced or patched. During Summer 2024, the preschool wing will receive standard carpet cleaning, floor waxing, and touch-up painting.



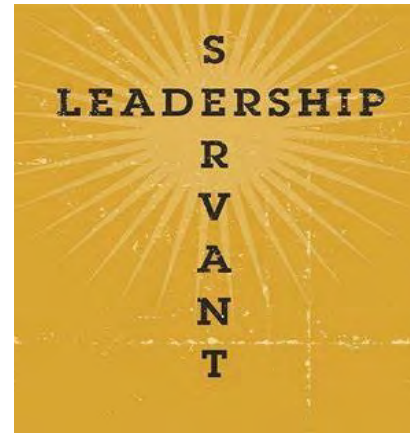
**Financial Status:** Due to the planned expansion and its related additional expenses, and the lower student population in our preschool, there have been several Above & Beyond (A&B) requests for the preschool this fiscal year. As a result of the A&B funds received and additional volunteer staff in the preschool, we ended the 2023-2024 school year in the black. Our student numbers for this coming school-year (2024-2025) are very low, and with the hiring of the new Preschool Director to manage the expansion, our funds will be tight this school year as well. With the approved expansion and the possible summer camp options next summer, there will be additional staff required beginning Summer 2025 and for the 2025-2026 school year. The student numbers for the 2025-2026 school year may still not be enough to cover expenses (i.e., additional staff and benefits due to longer hours) for the first year of the expansion, as it is a new program, which takes time to build. A team has been established, led by Pastor James, to pursue two different grant applications, suggested to us by church members, to assist in our expansion efforts.



Kathy Otterbacher  
Interim Preschool Director

## Board of Servant Leaders

With the start of FY 2024 the Board of Servant Leaders looked to implement sustainable communication and interactions with the congregation, through the usage of listening sessions. The Board held two listening sessions with the congregation in FY 2024 intended to help define strategic priorities over a 5-year time horizon and received good feedback from the congregation. The Board provided the Senior Pastor with the feedback. The Board researched and reviewed several survey tools and approved Survey Monkey as the standard GSLC digital survey tool.



With the approval of the FY 2024 annual budget at the congregation meeting in August, the fiscal year was underway. The Board continued to work with the Financial Ministry to improve financial reporting and review. Efforts to review and revise the GSLC Employee Handbook continued. The Board improved Board internal practices by creating a digital repository to capture and create digital access to historical and active documents. The Board had two self-reviews to assess the Board's openness and communication among its members, with the Senior Pastor and the congregation; effectiveness in developing and monitoring policy; and performing its responsibilities. Policy Governance orientation materials were used to welcome new Board members. Minor updates were made to the Board of Servant Leaders Policy Manual, providing additional clarity and guidance to future Boards.

FY 2025 will bring additional efforts to strengthen GSLC's foundation to support growth. In addition to the annual congregational meeting, annual budget approval, and Board elections, there are plans to continue to finalize and approve the GSLC Employee Handbook. In addition, the Board will be supporting the preschool full-day transition, as well as the columbarium project. The Board looks forward to working with the staff, ministry leads and members in FY 2025 to develop policies supporting our congregational effectiveness to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Laura Blackburn  
Board Chair



## **Finance Attachments**

All finance attachments will be included with the release of the finalized “FY 2024 Annual Review and Peeks into Next Fiscal Year” upon the conclusion of the current Fiscal Year.

## **Communications Attachments**

Our livestream and recorded media platforms have seen continued growth. A listing of annual average weekly views will be included with the released with the of the finalized “FY 2024 Annual Review and Peeks into Next Fiscal Year” upon the conclusion of the current Fiscal Year.

## **Discipleship Attachments**

Sunday School and Bible Studies were offered, in various formats, throughout FY 2024. A complete listing of attendance will be included with the finalized “FY 2024 Annual Review and Peeks into Next Fiscal Year” upon the conclusion of the current Fiscal Year.

## **Worship Attachments**

Total attendance for all worship services increased during FY 2024. A complete listing of attendance will be included with the released with the finalized “FY 2024 Annual Review and Peeks into Next Fiscal Year” upon the conclusion of the current Fiscal Year.

## Annual Statistics

### **Baptisms**

Calire Darlington 9/23/23  
Tyler M. Shane 10/21/23  
Dahlia F. Cruz 5/5/24  
Kiara T. Davis 7/28/24

### **First Communion**

Hugh C. Conschafter  
James C. Conschafter  
Hannah E. Misleh  
Collin E. Sievers  
Layla G. Tyley  
Levi H. Tyley

### **Funerals and Deaths**

Barbara Paul 2/17/24  
Robert Saunders 4/25/24  
Esther Benson 7/15/24

### **Confirmed**

James Carlisle Conschafter  
Abigail Paige Daisy  
Eric ("E.J.") Donald Hoplin Jr.  
Thatcher William Hoplin  
Leah Isabell Karnes

### **Received into Our Fellowship**

Richard Gunther  
Kristi Hart  
Serena Kirchner  
Mikel Minschke  
Annette Montecalvo  
Richard, Brook, Jackson, and Margot Price  
Bernice and Laura Schoch  
Scott, Stacie, Levi, Layla, Leighton, and Lane Tyley  
Linda Wetzell  
Shanna Brown  
Lauren, Robby, James, Olivia and Claire Darlington  
Kathy Frison  
Molly and Christopher (Kit) Frost  
Brian, Megan and Cameron Glaser  
Kayli, Anthony and Leona James



### **Marriages**

Ashley Pace Small and Hunter MacPherson 4/13/24

### **Released from Our Fellowship**

Chad and Lindsey Sjaarda  
Debbie and John Linn





*Building up God's people  
through His Word  
for His world*



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