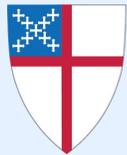


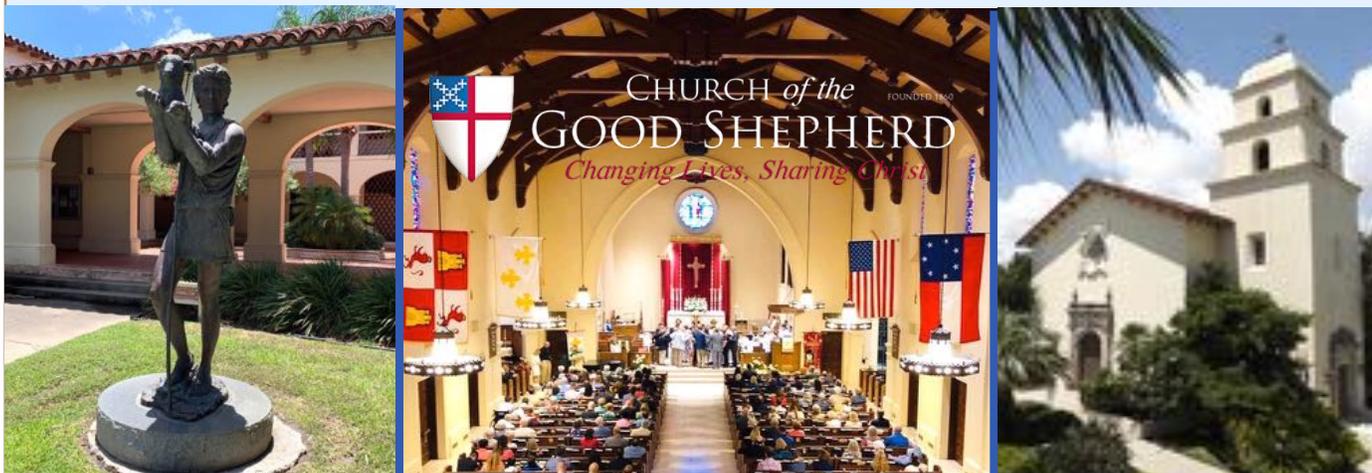
2021



THE GOOD SHEPHERD

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Volume 51, Issue 12



An Advent Message from the Bishop

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Always we begin in the dark. Not pitch-black, dead-of-night darkness, but Advent begins in a spiritual dusk from which the light of one candle on the wreath shines outward—a necessary, treasured reminder of the light that shines on in any darkness we find ourselves in. This light is like armor, a sure defense against the “works of darkness.”



We approach Advent and this new Church year still resurfacing, reconnecting, and finding our way back through this prolonged COVID pandemic. Life is getting so much closer to ordinary, with numbers moving in the right direction and vaccination rates increasing, including among younger children. Everywhere I've been in the Diocese of West Texas, people are so happy to be together, worshipping and doing ministry. We are in a better place than a year ago, even while understandable anxiety and frustrations linger. Nevertheless, we light our candle and trust that not even this present gloom will outlast the light that is coming into the world.

The Season of Advent's arrival will likely stir longing in you for tranquility, simplicity, and deeper meaning. Perhaps you will see the miracles of hope, love, joy, peace, and the birth of Christ as if for the first time through the eyes of a child. Or you may feel too busy, or too tired, to notice anything different; your church's practices and prayers, Scriptures and hymns may sound like the same old thing come November 28th.

But here's what's true: you are not the same as you were a year ago. Even without a pandemic, from year to year life's events change us, both subtly and dramatically. Over the course of any twelve months, our story will include gains and losses, hopes and fears, unwanted changes and unexpected joys. As we watch, wait, and prepare during Advent this year, maybe we will see and hear truth that we could not see or hear last year.

Advent begins in the dark, drawing us to watch, wait and prepare. The season invites us to acknowledge where we are; to take an honest look at our condition and the fine messes we've got ourselves into; and to consider our inability to fix ourselves and our need for a Savior. We are called to thoughtfully and prayerfully slow down, making an honest inventory of the darkness.

(continued on the next page)

A MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP (continued)

Consider: "What is God up to in my life? What is God doing in my church, in my home? If Christ will come again in glory, where are the signs that keep hope alive? In a world where so much is so wrong, where sin and evil wreak havoc, where the innocent suffer at the hands of violent individuals and systems, how do I find God? If we light the candles and put on the armor of light, what then shall our churches do to let that light shine on those around us?"

And here we are, living in these between times - ordinary people in our 87 ordinary churches, called and empowered for this extraordinary and holy work of bearing the light of Christ into the world. True Christmas spirit does not pretend the darkness isn't there, but lights that candle, straps on the armor of light, and steps out to care for those caught out in the dark, walking alongside them as Jesus the Light of the World does.

To anyone who has lost their way in this darkness, know that you have precious gifts to give. You have the light that shines on in the darkness. You have the hope that cannot be overcome. You have the good news that Christ will come, his Kingdom will prevail, and darkness will not last.

May Advent in your church, and in your life, become a time of light and peace, and may you become a bearer of light and peace. Let us watch and prepare together, with the unshakeable hope of those who await the dawning of the Son.

Love in Christ,
+David Reed
Bishop of West Texas

Christmas Services



CHRISTMAS EVE

Friday, December 24

5:00 pm Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist

8:00 pm Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist

Offering beautiful music, scriptures,
and a Eucharist celebration.

***Nursery and Children's Chapel offered
at the 5:00 service. Treat-filled shoes around
the Courtyard at both services.**

CHRISTMAS DAY

Saturday, December 25

10:30 am Christmas Day Holy Eucharist

Join us for this joyful worship on Christmas
morning. This is a quiet and reflective service.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS



**We will kick-off the Advent Season
with our Annual Chili Supper!**

Sunday, November 28

6:30 p.m.

Munds Hall Auditorium

**Bring a pot of chili, cornbread,
or a salad to share.**

You will have an opportunity to enter your
chili in our Chili Cook-Off if you would like!

Ice Cream Bar, Candle Making, and Crafts!

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 12

10:30 a.m.

We are excited to present our Christmas Pageant to you with a full cast of children and youth this year! Please join us for the best little pageant in South Texas!



Order Poinsettias to Honor Loved Ones

Christmas is a wonderful time to give flowers in memory of or in thanksgiving for your loved ones. If you wish to help fill the Church with an array of beautiful poinsettias in honor of your loved ones, you can donate to the Christmas Altar Flowers and be listed in the orders of service. Just cut this section out and return it to the church office with a check made payable to COTGS or you can give online at cotgs.org. The amount you donate is discretionary,...any amount is appreciated. Any amount above the cost of the poinsettias, will go to Mission & Outreach and Christian Education programs. Deadline to order is Friday, December 17th.

Given By _____

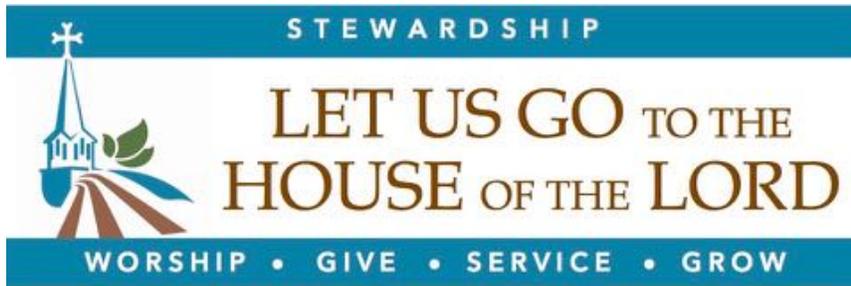
Phone Number: _____ Donation Amount _____

In Memory of: _____ or In Thanksgiving for: _____

Donations can also be made at cotgs.org/giving/pay-online/. Click "Christmas Flowers"

Please include all of the above information with your online payment.

CHURCH COMMUNITY



Thank You for your Commitment!

Thank you to everyone who has made your pledge for 2022! We appreciate your commitment to the mission and ministries of Good Shepherd. This season that we are living through has reminded us of just how essential the Church is in our lives, as well as our witness in the world. It is never too late to make your pledge.

Ways to Pledge

- **Pledge Card** - mail to the Church Office or bring to church
- **Pledge Online** - <https://cotgs.org/giving/make-a-pledge/>
- **Pledge on our App** - Ministry One

Memorial Plaque in the Narthex

The Church of the Good Shepherd has been blessed with the generosity of our members who have left gifts to the church through their estate planning. There have been several more recently, so we added another plaque! A huge thank you to the Jenette Hammer Guild and to the Egg Ladies for their donations that made the new plaque possible. Take a look at it the next time you are in the Narthex.



GIVE ONLINE

Giving Online at cotgs.org

3 Easy Steps:

1. Go to cotgs.org
2. Click the GIVING tab
3. PAY ONLINE & SUBMIT

The drop-down menu gives options to pay on your pledge as well as the ability to make other contributions.

LIVE STREAM

We continue to provide Live Stream video of our 10:30 a.m. Worship Service on Sunday mornings. The feed is found on the Home Page of our website at cotgs.org.

*We will not Live Stream our Christmas Pageant on December 12th at 10:30. Instead, we will stream the 8:00 a.m. service.

BREAKFAST FELLOWSHIP IN DECEMBER

Sunday, December 5th only

We will only serve breakfast at 8:45 a.m. on the first Sunday of December.

Breakfast will resume January 9th.

MISSION & OUTREACH

ANGEL TREE GIFTS FOR KOSTORYZ ELEMENTARY

Thank you for helping make this Christmas a special one for students in need at Kostoryz Elementary.

What to do: buy gifts for that child, place it in the provided gift bag, and bring it to the Church Office with the angel tag attached to bag.

There will be a sign-up sheet with the angel trees in the Church Office and in the Narthex. It is important to put your name on the sign-up sheet so we know who has committed to each child.

Each gift bag should include:

- one jacket
- one pair of shoes
- toys listed on the angel



(Sizes and interests are indicated on the paper angels.)

Please return your gift-filled bag with the angel tag attached by December 13th.

Good Shepherd's Corner is looking for Volunteers!

The Good Shepherd's Corner resale shop is looking for some new volunteers. This is a wonderful way to give your time to an organization that helps so many.

Why volunteer at the Corner?

- It helps the Corner serve our community! And it makes us feel good to help others!
- The Corner offers two shifts a day. You can pick your time. It's not a big time commitment!
- You can volunteer with a friend!
- High Schoolers can volunteer on Saturdays! It's a great way to learn a skill and get service hours.
- You are the first to see all of the new merchandise!
- It's fun!

Call the Corner at 361-883-0281 if you are interested in helping.

Visit gscornercc.com to find out more about The Corner.

Operation Christmas Child Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who participated in donating a gift-filled shoebox to children in need around the world. Your gift and prayers will show the child that receives it the Love of Christ. You are a blessing!

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Adult Sunday School - Last Class December 19th

LIVING WORD - Going Deeper into Sunday Scripture Readings

9:30 a.m. in the Parlor - Led by the Rev. Milton Black and the Rev. Philip May

ALL IS [not] FOLLY - Parent Class

9:30 a.m. in Dobbins Hall Adult Classroom - Led by the Rev. William Campbell

WALKING YOUR DOGMA, TALKING TO GOD

9:30 a.m. in Munds Hall Library - Led by the Rev. Frank Fuller

Wednesday Evening Classes - Last Class is December 8th

IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE:

Hearing, Praying, and Living the Eucharistic Prayer

6:30 p.m. in the Parlor led by the Rev. Philip May

CENTURIES OF SAINTS

6:30 p.m. in Dobbins Hall Adult Classroom led by the Rev. Frank Fuller

Important Dates in December

December 12 - Christmas Pageant at 10:30 a.m.

December 13 - Deadline to return Angel Tree gifts for Kostoryz Elementary

December 17 - Deadline to order Poinsettias in honor of loved ones

December 24 - Christmas Eve Services at 5:00 and 8:00 p.m.

December 25 - Christmas Day Service at 10:30 a.m.

December 27 - Church Office closed

December 28 - No Tuesday noon Eucharist

December 29 - No Wednesday 5:30 Eucharist

No Celebration Chapel for elementary-aged children in December

Last day for Children's Sunday School is December 5th (December 12th come for Pageant)

Last day for Wednesday Evening Classes is December 8th

Last day for Adult Sunday School is December 12th

Breakfast Fellowship on December 5th only (Resumes January 9th)

COMING SOON FOR THE SEASON OF ADVENT



DECEMBER YOUTH GROUP

Sundays for All Youth 6th - 12th Grade!

December 5 - To Be Announced

December 12 - Youth Christmas Parties

- Middle School at Youth House from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
- High School at the Beauchamp's 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

December 19 & 26 - NO YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group will resume on January 9th!

NO KINGDOM KIDS IN DECEMBER

We will not have Kingdom Kids
in December.

Join us January 5th!

CHILDREN'S SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

We will not have Children's
Chapel on December 26th.

We will not have Celebration
Chapel in December.

Last day for Children's Sunday
School is December 5th.
(December 12th come for Pageant)

CHRISTMAS FOR CHILDREN

Children are welcome at ALL Christmas services!

NURSERY

5:00 pm Christmas Eve Service

We will offer nursery for children **ages 1 and 2.**

CHILDREN'S CHAPEL

5:00 pm Service (Meet in the Children's Chapel)

We will offer a special children's Christmas Eve service at 5:00 p.m. for children **age 3 through Kindergarten.** Children will join their parents for communion.

CHRISTMAS EVE TRADITION

For generations little ones have left their shoes around the Courtyard just before the Christmas Eve services only to find them filled with candy as they depart after the service. We will fill shoes with candy at the 5:00 and 8:00 services.



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT



Sunday, December 12

*** 10:30 am ***

Join us for this festive re-enactment of
the birth of our Lord, Jesus!

**We are excited to have all children and
youth participate this year!**

Youth will be given parts at the Youth
House on Sunday, November 28th
at 6:00 p.m.

Children will be given parts in
Sunday School.

Please bring cookies to share afterward
in the Parlor on December 12th.

WORSHIP SERVICES & HOURS

Sunday Schedule

8:00 a.m. Traditional Eucharist
8:45 a.m. Breakfast Fellowship
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Family Eucharist
5:30 p.m. Come As You Are Service

Nursery For the Little Ones

1 - 2 Years in the Nursery 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Sunday School Classes

Sundays 9:30-10:15 a.m.

Children Meet in the Water Street Classrooms

Youth Meet in the Water Street Classrooms

Adults:

Large Group w/Rev. Black & Rev. May in the Parlor

Young Families w/ Rev. Campbell in Dobbins Hall Classroom

Small Group w/Rev. Fuller in Munds Hall Library

Weekday Services

Tuesdays at 12:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service

Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. Healing Service with
Holy Eucharist (Rite II)

Monthly Services

We offer a service of Holy Communion at the Trinity Towers retirement community at 3:30 p.m. on the first Sunday of every month.

St. James Chapel Services

Tuesdays at 8:05 a.m. Middle School Chapel

Tuesdays at 8:45 a.m. K- 4th Grade Chapel

Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. Preschool Chapels (4 services)

Thursdays at 8:05 a.m. All School Chapel

Parents are welcome at All School Chapel on Thursdays.

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

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