

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church



News from the Mountain Top

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September 2022

Parish News

“Walking with a Word”

By Josette Keelor

On Sept. 10, we held our first of four planned monthly Meditation Walks, led by Rev. Martha Clark. The theme was Walking with a Word, and on a brisk Saturday morning 11 attendees assembled at the pavilion on the Shenandoah University River Campus at Cool Spring Battlefield in Clarke County. Rev. Clark offered an introduction to the idea of meditation walks before we each chose a word from a table of options that we could think about while we walked. Then heading to a paved pathway along the river, we walked slowly, focusing on our breathing and our words. After 10 minutes, we paused while Rev. Clark talked about mantras that we could consider along the walk back. After returning, we ended with a blessing.



Our next Meditation Walk will be “Walking with a Friend” on Oct. 8. We’ll meet at 10 a.m. at Cool Spring Battlefield, 1400 Parker Lane, Bluemont, by the pavilion next to the parking lot. The walk will be about 45 minutes, starting with a greeting from Rev. Clark and ending with a blessing. Bring a companion (furry or otherwise) and we’ll focus on the natural world around us and the gifts of friendship. In honor of St. Francis, we’ll offer a blessing of animals and people present.



Will you continue in the apostles'
teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread,
and in the prayers?

I will, with God's help.

Developed by the Episcopal Church evangelism office

Submitted by Judy Hall

Coming in October to Good Shepherd is an opportunity to join a small group to explore how to bring Jesus into our lives as individuals, as a group, and as we relate to others.

Centered is a discipleship series guiding small, gathered communities to get deeply rooted in love with God and one another through fellowship, teaching, and a meal, so that we grow to look, act, and love more like Jesus. Each small group should be from six to nine people. We will meet at Good Shepherd unless the group chooses otherwise. More info can be found here: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love/centered/>

There are nine sessions divided into three parts:

- Living and Sharing Jesus-Centered Life,
- Forming Loving Relationships with God, Neighbors, Fellow Disciples, and Ourselves
- Grow in Love: Living an Intentional Life with God - Together

The Rev. Martha Clark will be guiding us through this series as we form small groups. We would like to form groups to meet on Wednesday or Thursday evenings, Saturday during the day, or Sunday late afternoons/early evenings. If you prefer a different time, speak up.

To join or lead a small group please contact Judy Hall with your preferred day of the week and time.

Judy Hall – judyrefo@gmail.com or text or call at 540-454-2148

This offering is made possible through the work of The Episcopal Church, in collaboration with **the Anglican Communion's Intentional Discipleship Coordinating Group**, with a grant from the **United Thank Offering**.

Congregational Discernment

By Charlene Fu

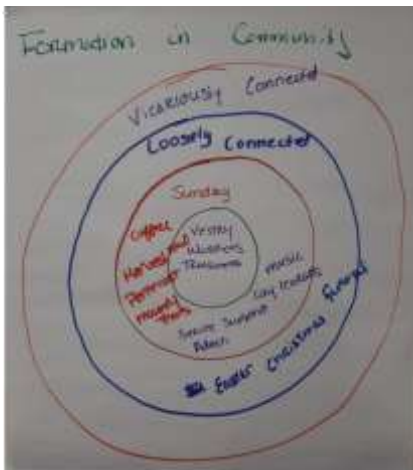
At a congregational discernment meeting led by one of the Diocese of Virginia's four facilitators for congregational development, several members of Good Shepherd Church learned that the number of people who consider Good Shepherd to be their church is likely to be far larger than reflected by the average Sunday worship attendance of 12-16 people.



Rev. Cynthia McKenna shared this surprising insight at a two-hour Saturday morning meeting on Aug. 27 attended by 12 Good Shepherd members. A graduate of a two-year program at the College for Congregational development Rev. McKenna used a series of exercises to illustrate how people become more closely connected with a church and to help identify Good Shepherd's areas of strengths and weaknesses.

She opened the meeting by saying the purpose of the church is "to reconcile people to God." Using a diagram made up of concentric circles and entitled "Formation in

Community,” she explained that people move from the outermost circle of being “vicariously connected” to the second circle of “loosely connected” to the third circle of regular Sunday attendance, and then finally to the core of being a vestry member or holding other church leadership positions.



Rev. McKenna further explained that those who are “vicariously connected” are people who consider this church to be “their church” but whom we probably don’t think of that way. These people might include neighbors who live near the church, or people whose extended families have had weddings, funerals and christenings at the church. She encouraged us to think of Good Shepherd as being comprised of a larger number than just the people who are regulars on Sunday morning.

The “loosely connected” are the people who show up occasionally and who may have discovered something they like more than a Sunday morning service. In the Episcopal Church, anyone who attends three services a year is considered a member, a fact that was a surprise to some attendees.

The way that people move from the outer circles to the inner ones is through relationships; feelings of welcome, warmth, connectedness, peace and authenticity promote closer relationships.

When Rev. McKenna asked us to list the ways that Good Shepherd engages with the community to draw people from the outer into the inner circles, everyone seemed surprised by how long the final list was: about two dozen activities and outreach efforts throughout the year – from the requisite Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday services, to free BBQ and ice cream socials in the summer; caroling at retirement homes and handing out gift tins at Christmas; regular monthly donations to support the local FISH food pantry and occasional drives to collect coats and baby supplies for local charities; participation in community efforts to provide warm shelter for the homeless in the winter and providing space for weekly meetings of a local chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous... Rev. McKenna said the list was impressive for such a small congregation.



She also applauded the fact that our church building is always open. A lively discussion ensued as to the reasons that most churches today lock the doors when their buildings are not in use and why so many church buildings are empty and unused for much of the week. Senior Warden Lois Tapscott pointed out that even in our out-of-the-way location, the unlocked doors have led to some acts of vandalism, but that has not led Good Shepherd to re-think its open-door policy.

The second half of the meeting was devoted to a self-evaluation exercise that asked attendees to rate Good Shepherd’s performance in four areas: Invite, Greet, Orient, and Incorporate.

The results on a scale of 1 (poor) to 6 (excellent) were:

- **Invite** (building, signs – e.g. The Episcopal Church Welcomes You, parking signs; brochures): 4-5
- **Greet** (worship norms; welcome – e.g. ushers who seat visitors with regular attendees who can help them use the Book of Common Prayer; hospitality; recognize newcomers at coffee hour): 5-6

- **Orient** (follow-up; orient around the building – e.g. signs for bathrooms; program activities; how to connect with clergy; spiritual formation classes): 3-4
- **Incorporate** (knit into the community; invite to baptism, confirmation; inquirers classes) 1-2



The final diagram that Rev. McKenna shared showed the three elements of Prayer, Service and Formation forming a circle with each element feeding into the other. In a brief discussion, there was general agreement that Good Shepherd was heavy on Service and needed to give more attention to Prayer and Formation.

The session closed with plans for a follow-up meeting in the spring.

It Happens Every Summer: Repairs and Other Church Updates

by Tim Hall

It's getting to be a regular thing around our church... each summer there's more maintenance work to catch up on. Last year it was gutter cleaning and gutter guards, attic vent repair, roof patching, parish hall ceiling spot removal and repainting, power washing the patio, electrical work including a new outdoor flood light, outdoor plug, and several new and upgraded interior plugs, and plumbing work including new bathroom sink faucets and drain assemblies, and new toilet flappers. This year, for starters, bathroom tile was repaired and painting was completed for both bathrooms, doors, and casing, and touch up in the basement for \$710. We rehung the bathroom mirrors so even shorter people can see themselves now, cleaned out the utility closet, disposed of some old, heavy, rotting tables and moldy shelves, replaced all the lightbulbs with LED bulbs, purchased a couple of new folding tables for \$84, and installed a new interior basement door and a new patio storm door at a cost of \$300. The basement was looking good.



But then, on the Sunday morning after our **"Just Because It's July"** community picnic, we found the bathrooms were inundated with a half inch of water and the toilets wouldn't flush. We had to cancel the use of the bathrooms. Phone calls went out for repairs, but before we could get a plumber in, the bathrooms seemed to have fixed themselves. Then, in August, it happened again. We'd had a leaking sink drain repaired and as Tim was showing off the repair to our cleaning lady by running water in the sink, the toilet bowl began to bubble up. A plunge of that toilet caused water to come out of the other toilet bowl. At that point, he knew we had a sewer line problem. So now we are dealing with our septic tank. But the first question was, where is it? A call to the county health department resulted in a copy of the original permit and installation inspection record being provided. The paperwork revealed that the circa 1971 tank is just outside the basement double doors. McKim Construction of Purcellville ran a camera down the line and has since uncovered the tank top. They will be returning with a new cover soon to open the tank and see what the issue might be. No doubt it needs pumping, since no parishioner can recall any time in the last 15 years when that has been done. More [hopefully good] news in our next newsletter.



Other summer projects include tree work, which has been started and is still underway. The large red oaks that surround our building have been pruned back so they present less of a threat to our structure and roof. And a scrub white pine was removed from behind the church opening up the woods a bit. The logs from the white pine, as well as logs from some hickory trees removed from our meditation garden area, will be used as borders in the garden, which, incidentally, has been cleared with paths now being laid. We have one more large, old, white oak near the parking lot



that unfortunately has passed away and must be removed. While all the pruning of five trees cost \$1,710, we did receive a \$500 gift to help with that expense. And the \$900 expense to take down the white oak and cut it into firewood lengths is being covered by one of our parishioners who is involved with a firewood outreach ministry that is going to come take the wood.

Our last big push this summer was to fix our driveways and parking. This was noted as a major concern by many parishioners in responses to our late spring survey. So far, we have spread and compacted 14 ton of 21A gravel in the back drive and parking area. We purchased the gravel from Stuart Perry quarry and Craven Landscaping spread and compacted it. Total cost: \$740.

Our front drive and parking area will cost quite a bit more. In addition to the currently paved areas, we also scheduled the paving of the handicapped parking space. We received four estimates and the vestry approved an expenditure of up to \$15K for this project. Look for updates in our next newsletter.



Our Community

Please pray for our neighbors and for ways that our church can serve the community.

If your **small group** would like to meet at Good Shepherd, send an email to office@goodshepherdblumont.org and Lois Tapscott or Judy Hall will be glad to talk with you. We would love to share this space with you for regular meetings or special events.

Diocesan News

Assistant Bishop Jennifer Brooke-Davidson Accepts Call to Diocese of North Carolina

The Rt. Rev. Susan Goff, Bishop Suffragan and Ecclesiastical Authority, announced that the Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson has accepted a call to serve as assistant bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina. She completed her ministry in Virginia on Sept. 22.

Bishop Brooke-Davidson's three-year appointment as assistant bishop of Virginia began on Nov. 1, 2019. As churches navigated the challenges of these last three years, including Covid, political unrest, and deepening racial reckoning, Bishop Brooke-Davidson took particular responsibility for the convening of the Deans of the Regions and for support of diocesan mission congregations through the Committee for Congregational Missions.

New Canon to the Presiding Bishop

Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has announced that the Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klusmeyer, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia, will succeed Bishop-elect E. Mark Stevenson in the role of canon to the presiding bishop for ministry within The Episcopal Church, effective Oct. 17. Klusmeyer will retire on Oct. 13 as bishop of West Virginia, and Stevenson will transition to his new role as bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia with a consecration date of Dec. 3.

Convention Planning

The 228th annual convention of the Diocese of Virginia will be Nov. 17-19 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel, 1700 S. Eads St., Arlington, VA 22202. For more information, visit www.thediocese.net.

Local Events

Sept. 30, 3 to 10 p.m.; Oct. 1, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Oct 2, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. — Ravenwood Faire: A Northern Virginia Medieval Faire at the Frederick County Fairgrounds, 250 Fairground Road, in Clear Brook.
Info and tickets: www.ravenwoodfaire.us

Oct. 14, 15, and 16 – Lucketts Fall Market at the Clarke County Fairgrounds, 890 W. Main St., Berryville. Enjoy home decor items, children's activities, and food vendors. General public hours are 12:30 to 5 p.m. on Friday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, but early buyer hours on Friday are 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Info and tickets: www.luckettstore.com/spring-market-venue

Outreach



AA meets at Good Shepherd every Saturday night at 8:30 pm, in person or by Zoom.

Drop in or contact:

<https://aavirginia.org/meetings> and search for Bluemont.



FISH of Clarke County (36 E. Main St., Berryville) The FISH clothing store and food pantry are open 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Visitors should wear face masks. Anyone not able to stop by when FISH is open may contact FISH at 540-955-1823 or via email at fishfoodpantry@comcast.net to schedule no-contact delivery.

Good Shepherd gathers donations for FISH every month. Please bring your donations to the church narthex by the last Sunday of the month. Lois, our senior warden, will be delivering the donations on the following Wednesday. In August, we donated 68 pounds of food, including canned goods, cereal, pasta, and lots of eggs, as well as a few paper products and some lotions. The following is a list of items needed:

- Canned meat (tuna fish, chicken, Spam)
- Canned fruits
- Peanut butter
- Cereal
- Boxed pasta
- Pasta sauce
- Soup
- 100% juices
- Paper products
- Toiletries

Church Calendar - All are welcome at our services!

SUN Oct. 2, 11 a.m. – The 17th Sunday after Pentecost: Holy Eucharist and a Blessing of the Animals with the Rev. Deborah Rutter

SAT Oct. 8, 10 a.m. – Meditation Walk at Cool Spring Battlefield

SUN Oct. 9, 11 a.m. – The 18th Sunday after Pentecost: Holy Eucharist with the Rev. Martha Clark

SUN Oct. 16, 11 a.m. – The 19th Sunday after Pentecost: Holy Eucharist with the Rev. Deborah Rutter

* SUN Oct. 23, 11:30 a.m. – The 20th Sunday after Pentecost: Morning Prayer with Josette Keelor

* SUN Oct. 30, 11:30 a.m. – The 22nd Sunday after Pentecost: Holy Eucharist and a Healing Service with the Rev. Deborah Rutter

* Please, note the time change to accommodate our guest pianist, John Sanger.

To join via Zoom, go to our website at www.goodshepherdblueмонт.org and click the link on the home page.

Giving

Checks may be dropped in the offering plate or mailed to:

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 324, Bluemont, VA 20135

Thank you for your generous support.

Any questions or concerns? We would love to hear from you.

Email us at: office@goodshepherdblueмонт.org

or Phone us at: 540-252-5825

or Visit us at: 27 Good Shepherd Road, Bluemont, VA 20135