



The Shepherd's *staff*

THE NEWSLETTER OF HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
LABOR DAY / SEPTEMBER 2021 — ORINDA, CALIFORNIA

BEE-WARY OF JERRY!

On Sunday morning in late June, a family of bees came visiting our campus in search of a new home. Their queen quickly determined that 'inside the wall on the front of our sanctuary' would serve as an ideal location for her new hive. And within a matter of days, we had a bee infestation on our hands!



We called on a number of pest-control companies, who told us they could do nothing because honey bees are now a protected species. Then a series of professional bee-keepers studied our situation and told us there was no way to physically remove the hive without removing the Sanctuary roof! But our own Jerry Perry said "Not so fast!!"

Patently and ingeniously, Jerry (who has had extensive experience as both a bee-keeper and an engineer) concocted a plan to safely relocate the hive out of our Sanctuary wall. First he installed an access tube where the bees were entering and exiting the hive, to get them used to a new 'front door' to their home. Then he connected a hive box on the front of that access tube to get them accustomed to that space as well. And then — finally — he installed a one-way gate in the original access tube, so that the bees could exit the hive but not get back in.

The bees were smart and diligent, and kept finding new ways in to their old hive. But they weren't as smart or as patient as Jerry! We're happy to report that some nine weeks after the queen and her family had moved in, she decided it was time to move out, and so she relocated into the hive box which Jerry had installed just on the other side of her front door. And then, on a calm and cool night, Jerry moved that hive box (and the whole bee-family with it) to the hillside overlooking the Perry home in north Orinda!

Thanks to Jerry's patience and ingenuity, the bees have been safely relocated off our property, and we can once again use the front door of our Sanctuary! Bravo, Jerry! We thank you, and trust the bees do too!

EVENTS SCHEDULE

We encourage you to join in the following events — virtually and/or in-person:

Every Sunday at 9:30 am — Our weekly in-person worship opportunity in our Sanctuary!

Every Sunday at 9:30 am — Our in-person worship services are "Live-Streamed" via Facebook @HSLCORinda.

Every Sunday at 10:30 am — An abbreviated Coffee Fellowship time takes place following our in-person worship service.

Every Sunday at noon — A recording of our weekly 'Worship Video' should be accessible via our webpage at www.holyshepherd.org or our Facebook page @HSLCORinda.

Third Sundays from 10:30a to 11:30a — Following morning worship on the third Sunday of each month, our Sanctuary is open for socially-distanced Holy Communion. (*Join us on September 19th!*)

Tuesdays at 7pm — Pastor John and/or Pastor Pam lead "Adult Ed" — a Zoom-based online fellowship opportunity. The Zoom Meeting ID# is 861 5874 8710 and the Password is 94563.

Ministry Update:

Improving our Prayer List and Prayer Chain

A number of Holy Shepherd church members have inquired in recent days about the possibility of strengthening our congregation's Prayer Ministry, and thus better supporting hurting individuals and households. We certainly affirm their concern, for we know that prayer can be an important part of our daily lives, a powerful expression of our faith and one way that we can be supportive of one another amid these days of social distancing. Yet we must balance those hopes against 'Patient Privacy Laws' by which our pastors are legally bound, as well as the presence of 'bad actors' who might use information gleaned from our website and online newsletter for ill (see the 'Phishing' article on the facing page!) In an effort to address all these legitimate concerns, we are working to revamp our Prayer Ministry in the following ways:

Prayer for Individuals in the Context of Worship Because our worship services and worship bulletins are publicly open and available online, we will only use first names when praying for individuals in the context of worship. For instance, when we pray for our service personnel during worship, we will say "We particularly lift up Brian and Meghan and Peter" without including their last names.

The Prayer List in the Monthly Newsletter Again, because our newsletter is available online, we will limit our use of names to first name and last initial (or last initials when necessary to avoid confusion) in our openly-distributed publications

The Prayer Chain for Congregation Members We are going to devote significant additional staff attention to making our Prayer Chain an effective resource for intercessory prayer. Effective mid-September, Prayer Chain participants will receive a private weekly email from Office Administrator Cristi Chow, including the names of those for whom we have been asked to pray, along with a brief description of their particular prayer request and their connection to our congregation. Additionally and as the need arises, occasional urgent requests for supportive prayer may be forwarded to Prayer Chain members. (Because of the confidential nature of the information contained in that weekly email and occasional urgent updates, Prayer Chain participants will be specifically reminded NOT to share/forward that information to others.)

Want to Become a Prayer Chain Member? If you would like to become a member of our revamped Prayer Chain, please email Cristi at hslccristi@gmail.com or call her at 925.254.3422 ext 100, and include your preferred email address for Prayer Chain communications.

Want to Add a Name to Our Prayer List and/or Our Prayer Chain? If you (or someone you know) is in need of prayer, email Cristi Chow hslccristi@gmail.com or call her at 925.254.3422 ext 100.

Belated August Celebrations

<u>Birthdays</u>	22nd John Hu.	16th Carol & Henry Kr.
2nd Jack Ch.	23rd Julia Ha.	22nd Cindy & Deepak Ku.
8th Russ Ro.	24th Lynne Da.	23rd Amanda & Erik Pe.
9th Diane Ol.	24th Taryn La.	25th Lisa & Chris Me.
11th Debbie Se.	28th Gabe Ja.	28th Carol & Bob Schm.
15th Mara Ja.	31st Janine Cr.	30th Diane & Terry Ol.
19th Henry Kr..	<u>Anniversaries</u>	
21st Yvonne Ts.	12th June & Harry Ho.	

September Celebrations

<u>Birthdays</u>	14th Barbara Sw.	<u>Anniversaries</u>
2nd Anne Jo.	15th Diana Ri.	12th Rita & Igor So.
2nd Jesus Pa.	17th Pam Sch-D	18th Diana Y & Bob S
4th Joy Ch.	18th Steve Sw.	22nd Nadine & David Co.
4th Ryan Ga.	21st Sally Ch.	25th Elizabeth Hu. & Doug McM
7th Amanda Pe.	24th Rolf Be.	
7th Carole We.	29th Bob Ch.	
8th Reni Ya.	29th Zachary Ku.	

MONTHLY PRAYER LIST

For Healing/Strength

Gloria & Bert E.
DoLoris & Doug T.
MaryHelene W.
Dr. Bob & Carole W.
Suzi M.
Henry K.
Judy B.
Diana N.
Pete Schm.
Zach Schm.

Brian H.
Peter K.

For Peace/Comfort

Harry H.
Rolf B.
Donna G.
Carol K.
Marilyn & Krist L.
Marian McG.
DeLane R.
Marilyn N.
Igor & Rita S.

For Those Serving

Meghan H.



Our brother Victor Gess passed into the company of God's saints in late July, after the cancer which began in his lung spread throughout his body. Victor was preceded in death by wife Hollie, son Jim and daughter Cathy, and is survived by daughter Cynthia. We will celebrate Victor's life with a memorial service on November 14th.

WE'VE BEEN 'PHISHED'



We were recently alerted to the fact that a computer hacker has accessed our website and online information as part of a 'phishing' scam. Apparently, someone created a fictitious email account under Pastor John's name and then sent out a series of emails and texts asking for money. The request may have seemed odd, but the email sure looked authentic! We had been 'phished'.

'Phishing' scams like this are becoming increasingly commonplace in our world — and it can be difficult to discern between legitimate requests and scams. These online predators follow a pretty standard playbook:

1. The bad actors hijack the identity of a trusted leader.
2. They text or email congregants with a sob story about how a cancer patient is hurting for cash or a family is about to lose their home or something similar.
3. Then there's always an excuse as to why the trusted leader can't help at the moment and make it sound urgent, at then identify that it's up to you to step up because they can't.
4. Finally they ask you to buy one or more gift cards and transfer the funds off those cards to them by sharing the gift card serial numbers and PINs.

While we do not know of anyone who has actually fallen prey to this scam, we lament that there are bad actors out there who would dare do such a thing. And so, we encourage you to be alert to the following:

- Our pastors (and other congregational leaders) would NEVER ask you to send them money directly or to send money directly to anyone else.
- Gift Cards are the primary medium of exchange for 'phishers' because they are almost impossible to trace. NEVER trust anyone who asks you to make a transaction using gift cards!
- Our church's finance system is in place to support legitimate needs in our congregation and community. In fact, the checks and balances in our finance system are specifically designed to minimize fraud or malfeasance.
- If you believe you have been targeted by a 'phisher' or other online predator, please contact Pastor John Valentine or Congregational Treasurer Steve Swanback at your earliest convenience.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) puts clergy scams in the larger category of impostor frauds, which triggered nearly a half-million complaints nationwide — and nearly \$1.2 billion in losses — in 2020!

A WORD FROM PASTOR JOHN



Of all those timeless adages that my beloved mother attempted to instill in those of us who were her children, perhaps none rang sharper in my ears than the phrase "Patience is a virtue". Perhaps it was because she knew patience was something that would serve us well in adulthood. Perhaps it was because she knew patience would make our lives together as a family much easier. Perhaps it was just because she knew I didn't have much patience to begin with!! But she preached patience — and embodied patience — her whole life long.

Amid news reports that we might well be needing COVID-vaccine booster-shots in the coming months, I wonder if we might not also need 'patience-booster-shots' as well. None of us wants to keep wearing masks. None of us wants to keep social distancing. None of us enjoys having our personal freedoms limited. ALL of us are sick and tired of this pandemic we've been living through. But we need to continue taking necessary health precautions (masks and social-distancing and hand-washing and travel-restrictions and the like) for the sake of the most vulnerable among us. Vaccines are still not yet approved for the youngest members of our community, and the so-called Delta Variant has caused a rapid rise in breakthrough infections among all age-groups.

A wiser person that I once noted: "Patience is not the ability to wait, but the ability to keep a good attitude while waiting." And Saint Paul numbered patience of one of the nine 'Fruits of the Spirit' in Galatians 5:22, and identified it as a gift that comes from God. May we be blessed with an abundance of patience as we weather these days of COVID-19 together. Because — as Saint Paul remarked just before calling patience a 'fruit of the Spirit' — "You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another." (Galatians 5:13)

Cristi Chow — our new Office Administrator — is a can-do gal with an accommodating spirit, but hers is a part-time position (limited to 12 hours per week.) In order to facilitate healthy work/life boundaries for Cristi, it is important that we use her church email account (HSLCCristi@gmail.com) when communicating with her about church business. Additionally, please limit church-related phone calls to her to office hours using the front office phone. (Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9am-1pm at 925.254.3422 ext 100). By contacting Cristi about church business on her personal cell phone (or texting her), we are eroding healthy work/life boundaries.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES RETURN THIS FALL!

TUESDAY EVENING ZOOM ADULT ED.

Starting September 14th, our weekly "Adult Sun/Tuesday School" resumes! This conversational and devotionally-focused study opportunity focuses on the Scripture lesson read in worship the previous Sunday, and allows for reflection both on what the text 'means' and what the text 'means for us'. Adult Ed. happens each Tuesday night at 7pm on Zoom. (The Zoom Meeting ID# is 861 5874 8710 and the Password is 94563.) It's led by Pastor John and/or Pastor Pam.

MEN'S 'ACADEMIC' BIBLE STUDY

This Fall, we're debuting a new online study-group for men focusing on an academic approach to the New Testament. This study is specifically designed for men who want to look at the New Testament both as a historical document and the Word of God. The text we'll be using is N.T. Wright's weighty The New Testament in Its World. Pastor John will serve as teacher, and Bob Bauer will serve as class coordinator. Tentatively, our 'Academic Bible Study' will begin on Wednesday, September 22 and then meet via Zoom on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. Contact Bob Bauer for more information.

FAITHBUILDERS CONFIRMATION

FaithBuilders — our congregation's Confirmation program — is currently forming a new cohort. If you are (or your child is) a Middle School or High School student and would like information or would like to enroll in our twice-monthly learning and activity-based program, contact Pastor John at jvalentine@holyshepherd.org. Our FaithBuilders program is designed to help kids discover what it means to say "I love you too" to the God who says "I love you" to them!

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Janine Crowe has a gift for making lemonade out of lemons! For a number of years now, Janine has coordinated both a weekly Women's Bible Study and the monthly "Bible and Lunch Bunch" study group. But while COVID-19 has put a damper on those in person study group, Janine has found a new way to 'Get the Word out!' Daily, she distributes a devotional email to her study group participants that has been described as "uplifting" and "such an encouragement". If you'd like to be added to Janine's 'daily devotional' distribution list, email her at jlcrowe@sbcglobal.net

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