

The Shepherd's *staff*

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

HALLOWEEN / OCTOBER 2021 — ORINDA, CALIFORNIA

LARC IS THRIVING AGAIN!

COVID-19 shut down LARC — our community ministry serving households struggling with dementia — for fifteen months. But they've reopened and are now humming right along!

LARC Program Director Kathleen Januszewski is chock-a-block FULL of good news! She recently reported that our LARC program is quickly returning to a full operating schedule, with 15 participants enrolled in our Tuesday and Thursday sessions. Next up on the agenda is the reopening our Monday and Wednesday sessions, which she anticipates will happen in the first week of November. All of our participants, staff and program room visitors are required to be vaccinated, so as to minimize the risk of COVID, but the families we serve are THRILLED to have in-person access to LARC once again. (Kathleen also reports that six new participants have entered the program in the past month!)



On an adjacent note, Pastor John Valentine reports that LARC was recently graced with a gift of \$5000 from the Lowell Berry Foundation. This generous gift will enable us to staff up the Monday / Wednesday reopening in anticipation of participant demand. The Lowell Berry Foundation, based in Lafayette, was established in 1950 to strengthen Christian congregations and to assist social service programs in the areas in California where Mr. Berry lived and operated his business — Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Thank you, Lowell Berry Foundation, for your generosity!



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 — 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.

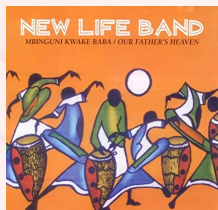
Third Sundays from 10:30a to 11:30a — Following morning worship on the third Sunday of each month, our Sanctuary is open for socially-distanced Holy Communion. (*Join us on October 17th!*)

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.

Social Ministry Update:

New Life Band

There's an old saying among global economists that 'when America catches a cold, the rest of the world gets sick'. It originally referred to how changes in the US economy impacted the economies of nations throughout the world. Little did those same economists know that when America catches COVID-19, the whole of the global economy would be impacted so greatly. While most of the news we hear is of how the US economy is doing, we don't hear as much about our global neighbors.

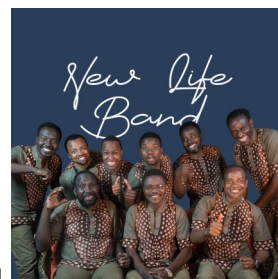


Pastor John and Sharon Tissue recently had opportunity to hear a report from New Life Band member Ondo Mabondo about our mission partners in Tanzania. "It's really tough right now", Ondo reported. "The tourism industry has ground to a halt, because no one is going on safari. So there's just not a lot of money." "But", he continued, "God is still good! Your generosity and support have allowed us to pay our salaries and to keep our band members to keep their children in school. We are blessed by God through you! We are learning to do things online, and we are working to share our music and our message in new ways. And it goes without saying that the message we have to share is one that the world really needs to hear right now! Thank you so, so much for walking with us in these difficult days."

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On Sunday, November 14, the ministry of the New Life Band will be the focal point of our worship celebration at 9:30am. And — barring a technological glitch — we may have some virtual worship attenders join with us from halfway around the world!

The New Life Band — now celebrating 42 years of ministry — is a music ministry team that serves as an instrument to transform the lives of youth and students within Tanzania through the gospel of Jesus Christ by giving them hope and opportunity knowing that they are loved. These eight talented musicians have become ambassadors for peace and forgiveness, performing throughout Tanzania and in Africa, Europe and the United States. As a cornerstone congregation of their triennial concert tour through California, Holy Shepherd has hosted NLB on several occasions!



The New Life Band received \$2,600 from Holy Shepherd in fiscal year September 2020 — August 2021, as part of our 'Giving Beyond Ourselves' — in addition to \$6,000 in direct support gifts from members of HSLC! Your generosity has helped sustain the New Life Band and is MUCH appreciated!

OCTOBER



Birthdays

3rd Alexandra He.

7th Bob Schm.

10th Zachary He.

19th Carys Ch.

20th Julia Vi.

20th Herb. We.

21st Marian McG.

22nd Belle Lin.

23rd George Ka.

25th Joe Zi.

26th Marilyn No.

27th Harry Ho.

30th Jordan Ku.

Anniversaries

1st Belle & Frank Lin.

6th Marci & Bob Ba.

12th Yvonne & Scott Ga.

12th Christine & Jesus Pa.

IN MEMORIAM



Longtime Holy Shepherd member 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 in our Sanctuary at 3pm on All Saints Sunday, November 7th.

(Please note the change of dates from previous announcements!)

OUR MONTHLY PRAYER CONCERNS FOR OCTOBER

For Healing/Strength

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

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.
Brian H.
Peter K.



Ending the Year Well

Giving Strategies that May Make Sense for You!

As year-end 2021 approaches, some of you may be interested in ways you can make tax-advantaged donations to Holy Shepherd and/or other causes you care about. What follows is a listing of some ideas from the Development Office at Luther Seminary that may make sense for you. We strongly encourage you to work with your financial planner or tax consultant before actually utilizing any of these techniques, as the IRS rules for each of them are precise.

IRA Charitable Rollover

Congress recently made permanent the law that allows people age 72 or older who own an IRA to make cash gifts directly from their IRA to charity. For many people, this is the best tax-wise way to give. An IRA rollover gift *will not* be included in your taxable income and yet *will* qualify for your required minimum distribution. We're pleased to note that a number of HSLC members with regular (*not Roth*) IRAs have taken advantage of this approach in recent years.

Outright Gift of an Appreciated Asset

If you hold stock which has appreciated significantly over the years, you may wish to consider gifting an appreciated asset. A gift of securities, business interests or real estate can provide you with significant income and capital gains tax savings, often exceeding the benefits of a cash gift. Pastor John noted in a stewardship letter a couple of years ago that this is a strategy which he and Bethany have often utilized as a tool for their giving.

Donor-Advised Fund (DAF)

If you are looking for an end-of-year deduction but want more time to make thoughtful giving decisions, consider a donor advised fund (DAF). Working with your tax consultant and financial advisor, you can establish a DAF in your name and fund it at whatever level you feel comfortable. You can then make grants from your DAF now and in the future to support our work and other causes you care about.

Zero-Tax Gift and Sale

If you are planning to sell an asset like securities, real estate or a business, before you sell, consider a "zero-tax" charitable gift and sale. By making a gift of part of the asset *before* the sale, you can use a tax-saving charitable deduction to significantly lower or eliminate the capital gains tax on the sale.

May We Help?

If you would like further information about these end-of-year planning strategies, please contact congregational Treasurer Steve Swanback or one of the members of our Stewardship Team. They will put you in touch with particular leaders of our congregation who have employed each of these different strategies, in hopes of explaining to you — in relatively simple terms — how those individual strategies have worked for them.

A WORD FROM PASTOR JOHN

Someone recently asked me what it was/is that I miss most in the context of worship amid these days of COVID protocols and social distancing and mask mandates. The answer I offered surprised even me!



Corporate worship is central to the lives of the people of God. We gather together to worship — to recall that God is God and that we are not and to put the First One first on the first day of the week. We gather together as Church — to be reminded that being the people of God is group-work, that the Church is a community more than it is a place, and that we are the Body of Christ. We gather together to sing and pray, to listen and learn, and to share in that meal that is "the foretaste of the feast to come". So when someone asked me what I miss most about worship 'like we used to do it before the pandemic hit', I had no lack of possible answers.

Sharing Holy Communion on a weekly basis is obviously something that many of us miss. So too is having the full contingent of choir members as a part of our weekly worship teams. And I really miss the 'greeting line' and the weekly hugs and handshakes with which we've concluded our worship services for as long as any of us can remember.. But the one thing that I think I miss most of all is that curious ritual we call "The Passing of the Peace".

Sure, the 'Passing of the Peace' may look like a simple, everyday greeting. People turning and greeting one another with a handshake or a nod or a hug. To some, it feels a bit too casual, like we're taking a break from worship. But for the earliest Christian communities, sharing the peace was a profound and radical gesture. It was (and still is) the embodiment of the promise that — in Christ — we gather as equals, as family members, as community. It was (and still is) a testimony that others are the medium by which the love of God is made real to us. It was (and still is) an assertion that no matter how rich or poor, how old or young, how privileged or marginalized, each of us has a gift to be shared and each of us needs the gifts which others offer.

Maybe we need look no further than the Easter narratives recorded in Luke's and John's Gospels to see how important the "Passing of the Peace" can be. What is one of the first things the risen Jesus says to the gathered disciples? "Peace be with you!" (cf. Luke 24:36 & John 20:26) By 'Passing the Peace', by sharing the Peace of Christ, we are literally passing along to one another a gift that has been given to us by Jesus. May YOU know the Peace of Christ in your hearts and in your lives, and may you share that same peace with others. The Peace of the Lord Jesus be with you all!



WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

IT'S TIME!! It's time for the Women's Book Club to begin meeting together again. If you enjoy spending time with your nose in a book and then discussing it with others who also enjoy doing the same, perhaps you might like to join us. We typically read works of popular fiction and meet once a month for lively conversations about them. For more information, please contact Bethany Valentine at 925-286-9854

EVER TRY AN ONLINE SING-ALONG??

Our Children's Music coordinator and regular LARC musical guest Leslie O'Brien invites you to join in an online sing-along! These days of COVID have left many feeling isolated. But Miss Leslie is looking to change that. "Singing with Leslie" is an opportunity to lift our spirits together through music — many of which are sing-alongs. Everything from hymns to folk songs to Broadway show tunes! Thursday afternoons at 1pm on Zoom. (Meeting ID: 841 5107 4448 / Passcode: 735051)

MEN'S 'ACADEMIC' BIBLE STUDY

This Fall, there's a new 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 historical document and Word of God. Our 'textbook' will be N.T. Wright's weighty The New Testament in Its World. This is a 'hybrid' class with both in-person and virtual access scheduled for the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. Contact Bob Bauer for more information.

FAITHBUILDERS

FaithBuilders — our 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. FaithBuilders meets on the 2nd and 4th Sunday mornings of each month, 10:40 to 11:20a, in the CFM.

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