

# The Shepherd's staff

THE NEWSLETTER OF HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH — EARLY SUMMER 2025  
433 MORAGA WAY, ORINDA, CALIFORNIA — [WWW.HOLYSHEPHERD.ORG](http://WWW.HOLYSHEPHERD.ORG) — (925)254-3422

## HOW QUICKLY A YEAR GOES BY!

*It was in late Spring of 2024 that we had an unexpected visit from a local seminary student (doing her studies remotely at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.) That visit led to conversations, and those conversations led to an internship opportunity, and for the past eleven months now, we been blessed to have Vicar Meagan Kim serving her year of internship among us!*

What an honor, a joy and a blessing it has been for our congregation to host Vicar Meagan Kim during her internship year among us. When we began that “year of pastoral residency”, we accepted mutual responsibilities to be both teachers and learners — that Meagan would be learning about ministry a life among God’s people from us and that we would be learning about God and our life as God’s people from her. Needless to say, we have learned from her! Her provocative preaching, her thoughtful care and her passion for connecting God’s word with the lives of God’s people were all evident from the get-go, but she’s been able to refine those gifts among us. And she’s learned from us as well — about the rhythms of the church year and the rhythms of ministry and the challenges and joys of being a pastor.

But now it comes time for us to say “Well done” and “We’re going to miss you” to this unexpected gift. Vicar Meagan’s time among us as an intern draws to a close at the end of July. (She’ll still be living in Pleasant Hill, but her focus shifts back to the classroom as she begins her final year of seminary study this fall, so she’ll no longer be our “Vicar Meagan”.)

Join us on Sunday, July 27th as we celebrate the conclusion of Vicar Meagan’s internship journey in our midst! We’ll say “You’ve successfully passed this class” in the context of worship that day, and then we’ll informally say “Bravo” with a BBQ luncheon following worship (see the back page of this newsletter for more details.) Members of the Internship Committee are coordinating a card basket in Meagan’s honor, so if you’d like to pen a personal note of encouragement and appreciation to Vicar Meagan, please mail it to (or drop it by) our church office before that date! And join us on July 27th to say “Thanks, Vicar Meagan, you’ve been a real gift to us all!”



## WEEKLY EVENTS SCHEDULE

*We encourage you to join us at worship however you are able!*

**Sundays at 9:30 am** — Our weekly in-person worship opportunity with Holy Communion in our Sanctuary

**Sundays at 9:30 am** — Our in-person worship services are “Live-Streamed” via our Facebook page @HSLCOrinda.

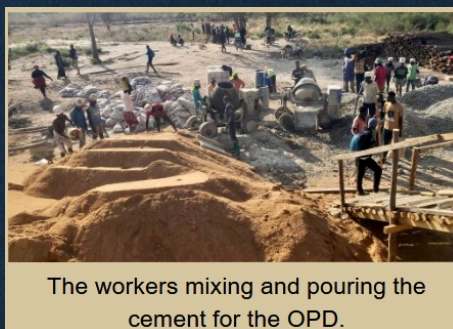
**Sundays at 10am** — Our Sunday School program for Kids is currently on Summer break, but returns mid-August

**Sundays at 10:30 am** — Coffee Fellowship takes place following worship in the Center for Ministry.

**Sundays at noon** — Our ‘Worship Video’ is up at [www.holyshepherd.org](http://www.holyshepherd.org) or on Facebook at @HSLCOrinda.

# Mission Partner Update: International Health Partners

IHP Board Member David West — who visited us along with Paula last October — writes: “Hello again to the supporters of IHP! It’s been another productive month here at Chihoni. I’ll leave it to Sele to detail things for you, but a few of the highlights include the new borehole next to the Outpatient Department that will provide water for the OPD and for the guest hostel. We fenced the 7 acres we have across the road that will house the chapel, some staff houses, and houses for visiting doctors who are here for an extended stay.



The workers mixing and pouring the cement for the OPD.

Just yesterday, we poured the slab that forms the floor of the back half of the OPD and the ceiling of the lower level, which houses the eye center and dental suites. All was done to the exacting specifications and standards of quality that Sele and IHP require. Everything is built with care. No shoddy work allowed. I have so much respect for the hard-working staff and laborers that are doing such intensive work. The blocks all weigh about 50 pounds. Each one is individually carried from the block-makers to the truck, and then from the truck to the building, where masons lift and place them on the wall with precision. It’s done with pride and enthusiasm and mostly without complaints. I’m so impressed by the Tanzanian work ethic and I feel blessed and privileged to be a part of such a worthwhile endeavor. Thank you to all of you who are providing prayers and donations to facilitate these accomplishments. You have our deepest gratitude!”



International Health Partners was founded by Dr. Denny and Paula Lofstrom more than 25 years ago to improve health care for the people of Tanzania by integrating medical knowledge, techniques, and best practices within the East African culture. They employ and train local health care professionals and rely on the generosity of others to build efficient facilities without sacrificing the quality of their patient care.

Holy Shepherd has been an instrumental supporter of the work of IHP-TZ/US for more than two decades. As one of our identified “major mission partners”, we forward an quarterly gift equal to more than 1% of our offerings and contributions to IHP, which equates to more than \$3000 a year. IHP is one way we take seriously Jesus’ words, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.”

## PRAYER list...

To have a name included on our congregation’s Prayer List or emailed Prayer Chain, please contact Cristi Chow at [hslccristi@gmail.com](mailto:hslccristi@gmail.com)

### For Those Serving

Meghan & Brian P.  
Peter K.

### For Healing

Lisa V.  
Amy M.  
Judy B.  
Bill K.

Mark Z.  
Mary Helene W.

### For Consolation

The family of Marilyn Norleen as they grieve the passing of their devoted mother and grandmother on May 28th, and as they prepare for Marilyn’s Memorial Service in mid-September

### For Peace & Strength

Louise H.  
Marian McG.  
DeLane R.  
Diana N.  
Howard R.  
Gail B.  
Gary P.

### Birthdays

7/2 — Christopher D.  
7/3 — Paula E.  
7/13 — Elise A.  
7/18 — Doug McM.  
7/26 — Tracey B.  
7/30 — Lillian K.  
7/31 — Claire W.  
8/2 — Jack Ch.  
8/8 — Russ. R.  
8/9 — Diane O.

8/11 — Debbie S.  
8/22 — John H.  
8/23 — Julie H.  
8/24 — Lynne D.  
8/24 — Taryn L.  
8/31 — Jane Ch.  
8/31 — Janine C.

### Anniversaries

7/4 — Howards  
7/4 — Stensons  
7/4 — Primeauxs

7/20 — Valentines

7/24 — Heuers

7/30 — Henry/Dockters

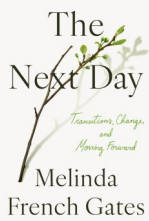


## Finance Office Transition

When Jack Pease passed away unexpectedly back in 2015, local accounting wiz **Mary Friese** stepped into what she thought was a short-term position as our overseeing Accountant. Mary has been trying to “work herself out of a job” for quite some time now, and we’re pleased (for her sake, not ours) that it appears that is finally happening!

At the May Church Council meeting, Congregational Treasurer Chris Merlin was pleased to report the hiring of **Bridget Marko** to serve as our new Bookkeeper. Bridget comes to us with extensive prior bookkeeping experience at the Golden Rain Foundation in Rossmoor. Both her keen knowledge of good financial practices and her warm smile make her a great addition to our staff team. Bridget will normally be available in the office on Tuesdays if you have a giving-record question, but can best be reached by email at [holysshepherdfinance@gmail.com](mailto:holysshepherdfinance@gmail.com).

Welcome aboard, Bridget!



The **Women's Book Club** gathers monthly (at 10am on the first Saturday of each month in our Center for Ministry) to reflect on works of both contemporary and classic authors. Next up is The Next Day: Transitions, Change, and Moving Forward (by Melinda French Gates) — which they'll tackle on Saturday, August 3rd. Talk to Juanita Gilbertson or Bethany Valentine is you'd like to know more.

In anticipation of our upcoming congregational meeting on September 7th, a Nominating Committee (consisting of Steve Swanback, Nina Berchtold and Elizabeth Humphrey) has been seated by the Church Council. The Committee's work is to identify folks willing to serve a three-year term on the Church Council. If you would be interested in being a part of our congregation's elected leadership team as a member of the Council, speak with a member of the Nominating Committee or with one of our pastors.



Vicar Meagan and Steve Swanback have breathed new life into our long-standing partnership with Loaves & Fishes! Beginning in May, Holy Shepherd (together with folks from Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Lafayette), has taken on responsibility for

staffing the Loaves & Fishes Dining Room in Martinez on the 4th Friday of each month. If you'd like more information, (or if you like to become part of our monthly crew!) please speak with Vicar Meagan, Steve Swanback or Tracey Blanchard ... because NO ONE should go hungry!

We offer a hearty "THANK YOU" to Eagle Scout Candidate Raul Dial from Scout Troop 303 in Orinda for resealing the center section of our parking lot and restriping the whole of the lower and middle lots!



With the heavy weekday traffic that our parking lot endures, it is vital for the safety of both our Preschoolers and our LARC participants that things be well marked! In conjunction with a repainting of our parking lot curbs (Thank you, Tschudi family!), we can now rest assured that our campus is much safer for both drivers and pedestrians. Hooray!



Thank you to the MANY hands that have helped out with our push to bring our campus into compliance with new Moraga-Orinda Fire Dept. regulations. Weed-whackers and tree-

trimmers, and shovels and rakes and hoes and blowers and clippers and brooms, all got put to work to help make our property more ready for the upcoming fire-season in our community. Bravo!

## A WORD FROM PASTOR JOHN



On July 4, 2025 our Nation celebrated its 249th birthday. As John Adams predicted all those years ago, "Independence Day" has been "celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival", and those celebrations regularly include "Pomp and Parade ... Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other." The Fourth of July has been a day for us to be proud of — and thankful for — the nation in which we share.

But THIS Independence Day somehow felt different. The cultural and political disagreements which have gripped our nation in recent years leave many of us wondering if we deserve to call ourselves "The UNITED States of America" at all. While we may be proud and thankful of where we have been, we wonder if we should be proud and thankful for where we appear to be headed.

In the face of these tumultuous times, I find the following prayer (taken from the ELCA's 'Prayer Book for the Armed Services') to be particularly poignant as we seek a God's-eye-view on our lives and our nation. And I invite you to pray it with me in days ahead — as we celebrate the gift of this nation which we share:

*Almighty God, you have given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly ask you that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will.*

*Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought here out of many nations and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in your Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to your law, we may show forth your praise among the nations of the earth.*

*In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness and in the day of trouble, do not allow our trust in you to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Join In Our "VICAR MEAGAN CELEBRATION"!



After worship on Sunday, July 27th, we're celebrating our beloved Vicar Meagan Kim's completion of her internship year! Since she'll still be in the area once her internship is over, we can't really have a "Going Away" party, but Vicar Meagan (and her accomplishments) are worth celebrating nonetheless! So join us in our Center for Ministry for a picnic-style lunch starting at 10:45am that day as together we say "Well Done!" at our 'Vicar Meagan Celebration'!

Members of Vicar Meagan's Internship Committee are coordinating the plans for that day, and they're imagining grilled sausages and picnic-style sides as the order of the day. (Think 'potato salad', 'fresh corn salad', 'baked beans', 'cole slaw' and chips or other munchies — for the chipmunks and the munchkins, of course!)

We'll provide the sausages (and hot dogs), as well as the buns and condiments and beverages.

The Internship Committee is planning to provide a celebratory dessert. You're invited to offer a picnic-style side dish if you're able, or just to show up and celebrate! (Nina Berchtold will be coordinating this effort so let her know what you might be able to bring!)

When? **Sunday, July 27th — 10:45a 'til Noon(ish)**

Where? **On campus at our Center for Ministry**

Cost? **Free**

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