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# January 2024

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## *Thoughts from Pastor Stites:*

Happy New Year! As usual, many look at the new year with a measure of hope and excitement. The whole purpose of resolutions is to leave the old behind, and try and improve your life. But I will admit, I have not heard such doom and gloom over the coming year in my entire life. Whether it's just a measure of hysteria from the news or actual fears of what the future holds, many have already given up on 2024, and are preparing for the worst. So, will 2024 be joyful, or the end of the world?

While I could go into a whole "end times" discussion, I am reminded of when Jesus told Peter how he was going to die, and Peter looked at John, and asked, "What about him?" To which Jesus replied, "*If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? **You follow me!***" (John 21:22)

In the midst of an unknown future, people can be consumed with fear, and look for any wisdom or guidance to find solid ground to stand upon. Sadly, most turn to the wisdom of the world, and fall into jealousy, anger, and/or despair. Like Peter, they are looking at all around them, and want to know what they have. But as Christ directs Peter, "What is that to you? You follow me!"

The future is uncertain, a mystery to us until we walk in it. But not to God, He holds our future in His hands, and guides us according to His good and gracious will. In the midst of the ups and downs of life, we follow where God leads us. When we become fearful of the road ahead, are we trusting in God to guide us? If we are looking to others, to what they have and what we don't, are we trusting in God to provide for us?

As Psalm 23:3-4 says, "*He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*" While we would all love an easy life filled with only blessings from God, at times, He leads us through difficult times here and now, and we trust in our Good Shepherd to lead us through the valley of the shadow of death and into the green pastures of Paradise.

So, whether 2024 is a joyful year filled with blessing, or year of challenges, difficulties, or even our worst fears, what does that matter? **YOU FOLLOW GOD**, our *Good Shepherd*, through all the green pastures and dark valleys of this journey we call life. This not only gives us hope for what the future holds, but helps direct how we respond to the challenges that lay ahead, following in the footsteps, as well as the same love, of our Good Shepherd.

*Pastor Jonathan Stites*

# Announcements & Upcoming Events

**\*Phone numbers and addresses will no longer be published. Please use the church directory or call the church office @ 928-345-9694, if you need someone's number or address for an event\***



## Online Services & Bible Studies

Sunday's Services and Bible Studies are available on our YouTube Channel. Just click on the following link: [Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube page](#) or search "Shepherd of the Hills Yuma" on YouTube.



## Women's Bible Studies

Wednesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 7:30am at Karly Dockter's\*

Thursday, January 11<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30am at Carol Rice's\*

Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30am at Kathy Richardson's\*

Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30am at Karly Dockter's\*



## LWML's Annual Yard Sale

January 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>, 7:00am - 1:00pm

Time to start decluttering your home.

Donations may be brought  
to the fellowship hall

**starting on Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>.**

Set up will be Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup>  
9:00am - 1:00pm



## Pillowcase Dresses

Starting Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00am in the church fellowship hall.

We meet every Monday and usually sew and put together dress kits until noon. You don't have to know how to sew, there are plenty of things you can do. However, if you have a sewing machine, we would appreciate it if you would bring it.

The dresses are sent to the Orphan Grain Train which is an LCMS based organization that ships virtually all kinds of goods to deprived people in as many as 69 countries. They also send needed supplies to people in the US who have undergone disastrous situations like tornados and hurricanes.

Join us for a fun and productive three hours.



## Choir Rehearsal

Tune up your voices! Choir rehearsals are on Wednesdays @ 6:00pm. Please join us for singing praises to our Lord and fellowship "making a joyful noise". See Sharie Jasper for details.



Next LWML meeting is January 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:00AM in the fellowship hall.  
We will also be setting up for the yard sale.



Thank you to everyone that attended the Ladies Luncheon. We had the best attendance ever. Esther did a program about coffee and teacups. Cups were exchanged and women had fun meeting the person that gave their cup. Thanks to the food committee for the excellent lunch and the decorating committee for the beautiful Nativity sets and table runners.



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Sweetheart and Singles Dinner coming February 10.  
Save the date for the special occasion.  
More info coming soon.

### **Sunday Undies**



Undie Sunday is February 11. Please bring a pkg of underwear or socks for men, women, boys and girls to minister to needy people within our Pacific SW District, MX, and beyond. Box will be provided in the back of the sanctuary.

LWML district Convention- June 7-9, 2024 in Rosemead, CA. If interested in attending the convention see Sharie Jasper for details.

*Sharie Jasper*





*LWML*  
*Christmas*  
*Luncheon*





## *SOTH Evangelism News*



We hope you all had a Merry Christmas and shared the good news of Jesus birth.

Last year we shared "Easy Evangelism" with you, several ways to break the ice when interacting with strangers. This year, we will continue sharing ways to interact, and will share more ideas and reasons with you.

I have a dear friend who radiates her Christian faith. She has a certain glow and peace about her at times that can draw people to her. When we are comfortable with our faith and our beliefs, we can have a wonderful peace within ourselves and want to share that Joy and Love with everyone. This is what God wants from us. He wants us to be heralds of salvation so that all will turn from their evil ways and share in God's gift of salvation. This is not too much to ask, so let's pray for chances to witness for him, and share the good news. You just might be surprised by his answer.

*The SOTH Evangelism Team*



## Is Money a Blessing?

It is God *“Who richly provides us with everything to enjoy”* (1 Timothy 6:17). Certainly, money and possessions are some of the gifts God gives us. They continue to be blessings, unless...

- money and things related to it are your greatest priority, causing you to place God second.
- money and things related to it keep you from regular worship of God.
- money and things related to it keep you from generously giving for God’s work.
- money and things related to it offer you false security and keep you from relying on God alone.

One the other hand, money is a blessing when...

- it’s returned to God in thanksgiving for all His benefits to you.
- it’s used to care for those in need.
- it’s used to bring the Gospel to all people.
- it’s viewed not as your own, but as a loan from God.

Let us keep money in perspective. It is a blessing from God to be used as a tool according to His plan. Chief among our blessings is our salvation won for us by Christ as He shed His blood for the forgiveness of our sins. Realizing this, we can then count money as a blessing.



(From Ron Chewning – Stewardship Advisors)

**To be reviewed and approved at the Council Meeting in January.**  
**SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**COUNCIL MEETING**  
**December 12, 2023**

Attendees: Jon Weeks, Pastor Stites, Dick Koppe, Brad Erickson, Sharie Jasper, Pete Dryer, Kelly Hinrichs, Sue Cairns, Barbara Koppe, Marcia Nichols, Donna Urquhart, Kathy Richardson

President Weeks called the meeting to order at 9:53 a.m.

Pastor Stites opened with prayer.

Secretary's Report: Minutes from the November 21, 2023, meeting were reviewed. Pete Dryer moved to accept the Minutes as corrected. Dick Koppe seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Balance Sheet and Income/Expenses for November 2023 were presented. Proceeds from two estates were reviewed. The Hansen Estate proceeds were \$210,965.51 of which \$150,000 was transferred to LCEF General Account. After expenses, proceeds were \$177,458.53. On the Morner estate, to date proceeds and expenses netted \$4,927.89 profit. Monthly bills are still coming in and the 2<sup>nd</sup> installment of property taxes is still owed. After review, Sue Cairns moved to accept the Treasurer's Report for November 2023. Marcia Nichols seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Stites reported that he is currently working on three different sermons to keep up with the Christmas season. He will take a couple of days off after Christmas. Communion will be served at all Christmas services.

President's Report: President Weeks noted that the 2024 Budget and election of Officers will take place at this Sunday's Voters' Meeting.

Vice President's Report: no report.

Elders Report: Dick Koppe reported that he is looking to find new Elders. He would like to have at least eight Elders. It would be good if the Elders were fulltime Yuma residents.

Trustees Report: Pete Dryer's activity reports for November and December were reviewed, copies attached. The status of the Morner estate was reviewed as well as correspondence between SOTH, attorneys, and Susan Ambrosi. After December 16, anything left in the house or storage unit becomes church property.

Evangelism Report: Marcia Nichols reported that Barbara Koppe will be leaving the Evangelism Committee at year end. Per Donna Urquhart, Debbie Graham has agreed to serve on the committee starting in January. Sharie Jasper asked if there was a way to get visitors to sign the Guest Book. The Evangelism Committee will discuss this at its next meeting. Marcia said that they are considering "Make Heaven Crowded" as the committee's theme for 2024. Council members felt this was a good theme.

Stewardship Report: Sue Cairns stated that the 2025 contribution envelopes have been ordered with a discount for early orders.

Administrative: Kelly stated she gets last minute requests for sign-up sheets, flyers, etc. Going forward she needs to have two weeks' notice to allow her time to schedule them around her other duties. For last minute signs, Kelly still needs a one week's notice minimum. As noted at the November meeting, to eliminate church hall scheduling conflicts, Kelly is going to put up a large calendar in the Fellowship Hall to be used for scheduling all church hall events. The calendar has been purchased and will be posted along with a list of rules for scheduling. These rules were reviewed.

Old Business: The Proposed 2024 Budget was presented. Dick Koppe brought up for discussion Administrative Assistant and Organist salaries. Kelly and Sharie were excused from the meeting. After discussion, Marcia Nichols made a motion to raise Kelly Hinrichs's and Sharie Jasper's wages by 3.2% for cost of living. Motion seconded by Sue Cairns. Motion carried. After reviewing budget items, Pete Dryer made a motion to accept the budget as revised. Sue Cairns seconded the motion. Motion carried. Slate of Nominees was next reviewed. Nominees will be introduced at the end of Sunday's service, and they will be available to meet with members prior to the Voters' Meeting. Nominations will also be taken from the floor during the meeting. Installation of Officers will take place on January 7, 2024. Sharie Jasper made a motion to accept the Slate of Nominees as presented. Dick Koppe seconded. Motion carried.

New Business: Current Sunday attendance was discussed. It was noted that traditionally when attendance reached 160, we would change to two Sunday services. We haven't hit this mark yet. If 160 is reached, approximately three weeks' notice will be given to members.

Sharie Jasper moved to adjourn. Sue Cairns seconded, and motion carried.

Jon Weeks adjourned the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Pastor Stites led us with the Lord's Prayer.

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**To be reviewed and approved at the Council Meeting in March.**  
**SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**VOTERS' MEETING**  
**SUNDAY, December 17, 2023**

President Jon Weeks called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m.

Pastor Stites opened with prayer.

Secretary's Report: Copies of Minutes from the March 26, 2023, Voters' Meeting were distributed for review. Sharie Jasper moved to accept the Minutes as presented. Kris Haugh seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Copies of the November Treasurer's Report were reviewed. Sharie then reviewed the details of the Hanson property sale. After expenses, proceeds were \$177,458.53. On the Morner estate, to date proceeds have netted \$4,927.89. Now that Margaret's daughter has removed property she wanted, the auctioneer will be called, the house cleaned and readied for sale. Anthony Spano moved to accept the report. Brad Erickson seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor reported that the Circuit is still looking for opportunities to work together. This would be mainly with the two other Yuma churches. El Centro is currently without a pastor and Holtville is being served by an interim pastor. We need to leave Covid behind and focus ourselves on ways we can reach out and share with others.

President's Report: President Weeks mentioned items that need to be worked on around the Church property such as fascia repair, painting inside and outside of the building. The building needs to be updated to keep people coming here. Think about and talk to your Elders or Board members about your thoughts. We need to think about the 10 acres we own on 40<sup>th</sup> Street. One idea we should look into would be to start a trade school on the property.



Vice President's Report: Brad Erickson thanked the Council for putting up with him. He is certain that Karly will be a good Vice President.

Elder's Report: Dick Koppe reported that he is having trouble finding new Elders. Mike Yelland is our newest Elder, but with the resignation of Pete Dryer and Rob Cairns, we need a few more. He reiterated Jon's comment that we think about what to do with the 10 acres. The value of the property has increased substantially since we purchased it.

Trustee Report: In Pete Dryer's absence, Kelly Hinrichs read the report he submitted, copy attached. The report covered many repairs and maintenance items in and around the church grounds during the year. The report also included work at the Morner house and the estate.

Evangelism Report: Marcia Nichols presented the Evangelism report. Friendship Sunday was a success. Donations to the Yuma Food Bank are on the rise. Two successful collections for Right Turn for Veterans were taken during the year. The Committee is going to keep track of how many first-time visitors we get. The congregation as a whole needs to pray for more people to join us. The committee's theme for the year is "Make Heaven Crowded" and this will be their focus for the year.

Stewardship Report: Sue Cairns noted that the congregation did a great job in picking up their donation envelopes for 2024. Sue further stated that the 2025 Envelopes have been ordered to take advantage of the "early order" discount. If anyone is interested in online giving, they should talk to Sue or Kelly.

Administrative Report: Kelly Hinrichs is working on getting an official Facebook page for Shepherd of the Hills. In 2010 an "unofficial" page was put on by Facebook. Kelly is working on getting this unofficial page deleted so she will be able to add our new page. If anyone knows how to do this, please see her. Our digital directory seems to have been well received. Another date for those needing to add their pictures to the site will be arranged.

Old Business: None

New Business: President Weeks presented the Slate of Nominees. For the office of President, candidates were Jon Weeks and Kristopher Haugh, Vice President - Karly Dockter, Secretary – Kathy Richardson, Treasurer-Sharie Jasper, Evangelism-Marcia Nichols, Trustee- Pete Dryer, and Stewardship-Sue Cairns. Ballots for the election of President were distributed and cast. For the position of Vice President, J. D. Rice moved that Karly Dockter be elected as Vice President, Kris Haugh seconded, motion carried. Carol Rice moved that Kathy Richardson be elected as Secretary, Sharie Jasper seconded, motion carried. Larry Lee moved that Sharie Jasper be elected as Treasurer, Paul Hinrichs seconded, motion carried. Joyce Viether moved that Marcia Nichols be elected as Evangelism Chair, Sharon Elledge seconded, motion carried. Brad Erickson moved that Pete Dryer be elected as Trustee, Walt Viether seconded, motion carried. Marcia Nichols moved that Sue Cairns be elected to Stewardship, Kelly Hinrichs seconded, motion carried. President Jon presented the 2024 Budget. A question from the floor was answered. Larry Lee moved to approve the 2024 Budget as presented. Marie Thompson seconded the motion. Motion carried. Following the count of ballots for the office of President, Pastor announced the election of Krisopher Haugh. Pastor thanked Jon for his many years of service as President. Installation of Officers will be held on January 7, 2024.

Sharie Jasper moved to adjourn. Sue Cairns seconded. Motion carried.

President Jon Weeks adjourned the meeting at 11: 20 a.m.

Pastor Stites led the Lord's Prayer.

## **2024 COUNCIL MEMBERS**

<b><u>President:</u></b>	Kristopher Haugh
<b><u>Vice President:</u></b>	Karly Dockter
<b><u>Secretary:</u></b>	Kathy Richardson
<b><u>Treasurer:</u></b>	Sharie Jasper
<b><u>Elders:</u></b>	Richard Koppe-Head
<b><u>Trustees:</u></b>	Pete Dryer
<b><u>Evangelism:</u></b>	Marcia Nichols
<b><u>Stewardship:</u></b>	Sue Cairns

### **2024 COUNCIL MEETINGS**

(10:00 a.m., 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday @ a  
minimum of 8 times a year)

January 16  
February 20  
March 19 (Tues. prior to Voters' Mtg)  
April 16  
May 21  
June 18  
July 16  
August 20  
September 17  
October 15  
November 19  
December 17 (Tues. prior to Voters' Mtg)

### **2024 VOTER'S MEETINGS**

(2 mtgs/year after or between  
Sunday Services)

March 24  
December 22

### January Birthdays



HINRICHS, Kelly	01/02
RICE, J.D.	01/05
SHOEMAKER, Lynn	01/05
ENGEL, Goldie-Anne	01/07
LEE, Larry	01/08
DRYER, Joyce	01/15
TICHENOR, Bonnie	01/16
EINWAECHTER, James	01/21
VIETHER, Joyce	01/23
APPELDOORN, Ron	01/26
DOCKTER, Lloyd	01/28
JUNKER, Cyndy	01/29
NICHOLS, Gary	01/30

### January Anniversaries



STEWART, Dan & Pat (51) 01/12

RICE, J.D. & Carol (55) 01/26



### FOOD BANK

December  
\$470

SEASON TOTAL  
January - December  
\$2776

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you. Deuteronomy 16:17

### Stewardship Corner

Because we know that we have a God Who loves us, has adopted us as His children, and wants the best for us, we are energized to be about His work. Out of gratitude for who God is and what He has done and continues to do for us, we respond by using our lives and blessings in ways that give honor and praise to our Lord. Acknowledging God as our creator and sustainer of all things, we understand our role as God's stewards. As God's stewards, we seek to manage our time, talents, and money faithfully and according to His will, which we discover in His Word. We become God's instruments through which He works to further His kingdom and help those in need.

### Treasurer's Report for December 2023

#### General Fund

Offerings Received: \$64,183

Offerings Needed: \$21,458

**\$42,725- over**

*(The Offerings Needed per month is the Annual Budget divided by 12)*

#### **Fiscal Year to Date 2023**

Offerings Received YTD: \$239,646

Offerings Needed YTD: \$257,500

**\$17,854- short**



## January 2024 at SOTH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sunday's Online Service available after 1:00pm click on following link: <a href="#">Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube</a>			Wednesday's Online Bible Study – click on following link: <a href="#">Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube</a>			
	<b>1 New Year's Day</b> 9:00am Quilting for Charitie - <b>Cancelled</b>	<b>2</b> 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00 Elders Mtg.	<b>3</b> 7:30am Women's Bible Study @ Karly Dockter's 9:30am Adult Bible Study  6:00pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	<b>8</b> 9:00am Quilting for Charities- <b>Cancelled</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
	LWML Yard Sale Set Up: Monday -Thursday 9:00am – 1:00pm				LWML Yard Sale: Friday & Saturday 7:00am – 1:00pm	
<b>14</b> 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	<b>15</b> 9:00am Quilting for Charities 9:00am Pillowcase Dresses	<b>16</b> 8:00am Men's Bible Study 10:00am Council Mtg.	<b>17</b> 7:30am Women's Bible Study @ Kathy Richadson's 9:30am Adult Bible Study  6:00pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	<b>22</b> 9:00am Quilting for Charities 9:00am Pillowcase Dresses	<b>23</b> 8:00am Men's Bible Study	<b>24</b> 9:30am Adult Bible Study  6:00pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>25</b> 9:30am Women's Bible Study @ Karly Dockter's	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards <b>Mite Box Collection</b>	<b>29</b> 9:00am Quilting for Charities 9:00am Pillowcase Dresses	<b>30</b> 8:00am Men's Bible Study	<b>31</b> 9:30am Adult Bible Study  6:00pm Choir Rehearsal			