



1500 Sand Lake Road | Holmen, WI 54636 | 608-526-4829 | gsholmen.org

The Shepherd's Voice – September 2026

Meet Your Vacancy Pastor

Pastor Tesch and his wife Barb were called into ministry in a dual parish, St. Peter's in rural Marshfield and Emmanuel in rural Stratford, WI in 1986. After serving there for 10 years they were called to Peace, Hartford for 5 years. In 2001 they were called to Trinity, Marinette where they served until 2022, when Pastor Tesch retired. After retirement, he served the vacancy at Shepherd of the Hills, Inver Grove Heights from 2022-2024, and the vacancy at St. Peter's, Hamburg, and St. Peter's, Chaseburg, from 2024-2025. They are now happily serving our Lord as members of St. Paul's, Onalaska. God has blessed them with 7 children and 6 grandchildren, all of whom live in the La Crosse and Cottage Grove, MN areas. We look forward to serving our Lord among his people at Good Shepherd and we pray that the Chief Shepherd will provide a permanent pastor soon.

Pastor Tesch contact information:

Email: pastor@gsholmen.org

Phone: 715-587-8521

Good Shepherd Anniversary Celebration

Mark your calendars for September 13th to celebrate how good God has blessed Good Shepherd these past 50 years. Pastor Arndt, who previously served here, will be the guest preacher. After the service, we will have a program in the church focusing on the 50 years and how God has and continues to bless Good Shepherd. That will be followed by a lunch in the fellowship area where articles from the past 50 years will also be displayed.

Good Shepherd will provide the meat and beverages for the luncheon, and we are asking congregation members to provide the rest. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex. Please see the sheet for the items that you can sign up for. If you plan to attend and bring an item, please sign up by September 6th. Don't feel obligated to bring something, you can just sign up for the meal as well. We hope to see many of you there!

Council Members and Their Roles

- **Jim Pagel:** Treasurer
- **Dan Schams:** Secretary and Education Team
- **Jacob Werre:** President and HR Team
- **David Carlson:** Worship & Inreach/Spiritual Care
- **Steven Blankenship:** Evangelism and Technology
- **Chad Wacker:** Building & Grounds and Fellowship

Special Collection for Missions

In thankfulness for the many blessings that God has bestowed on Good Shepherd over the past 50 years, we would like to support a new mission that is starting out in Altoona, WI. This is in coordination with our 50th anniversary celebration. Over the next month we will be collecting money to help them as they are in the beginning stages of establishing themselves as a congregation. This is a special way that you can thank God for being a part of Good Shepherd congregation, and also support another group of people hoping to establish their own identity as a congregation to reach out to the people in their area with the truths of God's Word.

If you would like to give a gift, you can put an envelope in the collection plate marked Altoona Mission. There is also a basket with envelopes in the narthex area where you can place your donation. We will be collecting gifts through September 20th. Thank you in advance for supporting this mission project.

Preschool News from Tammy Melott, Early Childhood Coordinator / Preschool Director

Summer is winding down and the teachers are busy preparing for another school year which will begin September 8th. Our classes are nearly full with only a few spots still available. Our full-time class has two spots available, and our afternoon class has six. The week before school begins, we will be having parent meetings for all the classes on individual evenings. This is when we go over the parent handbook and other rules/information about the classes. The children attend as well, and they get a chance to meet their classmates as the teachers meet with the parents. This goes a long way in helping them be more comfortable on the first day of school. We pray for God's richest blessings on this new school year, and also for the teachers and assistants that make our preschool program the best that it can be.



Thank you to everyone who has signed up for Sunday School already. If you have not done so, there is still time. Sunday School will begin September 20th and is for children 3 years - 6th grade. It is held every Sunday from 10:20am - 11:00am. Starting in late November, we need a music person for Sunday School. This could be for the remainder of the year which ends in May. If you would be interested in helping with this, please reach out to me at tmelott@gsholmen.org or talk to me after church. There will be several events throughout the year in which parents can be involved. Please watch for those announcements in the Weekly Voice. I also send out emails to the parents. We hope to see many of the children in our congregation involved in this important program, and encourage them to invite friends and neighbors as well!

The youth in 7th-12th grade are encouraged to be a part of the Youth program which is being run by Kala McClellan. They will also meet every Sunday for a Bible study. Kala also plans events throughout the year to get the youth at Good Shepherd connected to each other. Some of these events are extended to other WELS churches as well, so that gives our youth a chance to connect with other teens in the area and establish friendships beyond Good Shepherd. Watch the Weekly Voice for more information about this program. Even if your child cannot make it every Sunday, or to every event, we would love to have them involved when they can.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 24th. This will be when we have our Trunk or Treat event. We would love to have at least 10 or more cars involved, more details to follow late September. Last year we had a wonderful number of families participating, including several preschool families. We hope to have the same this year!

Mrs. Carlson's Preschool News

We are ready for school! The room has been cleaned and decorated. Name tags and folders and the first traveling book has been laminated. I visited 43 students and their families. We have the open house September 1st, 2nd, and 3rd where parents and students get to see the room and get to meet Mrs. Heather. School will begin on Wednesday, September 9th and Thursday, September 10th. At the end of the month will go on a hiking field trip looking at God's wonderful creation. We have a wish list of items we could use. Tracie has made a QR code for us, so it makes it easy for parents and members to view the list.



Mrs. Sime's Preschool News

Just like that summer is over and another school year is ahead! I am so excited to welcome our new and returning Little Lambs to our full-time classroom. We have a wonderful year ahead filled with learning, making new friendships, new adventures (5 field trips planned!) and, most importantly, growing in our faith and learning about Jesus' love for each of us.

I feel truly blessed to be part of the Little Lambs family and am so thankful for the opportunity to teach and watch these little ones grow. I'm looking forward to all the special memories we will make together this year.

It's going to be a great year!

Delaying At Home Bible Studies

While we just announced that we'd be starting At Home Bible Studies, we have decided to push them back to the first half of 2027 due to our current pastoral vacancy. We still plan to start them this fiscal year, but feel that the timing isn't right to add to our vacancy pastor's work load. If you have any questions, please reach out to Jacob Werre at jacobi_4@hotmail.com or 608-606-4426.

Opportunity to Help Good Shepherd Support Pastor Pope

As previously announced, Good Shepherd will be providing Pastor Pope with transition compensation and assisting with his health insurance costs for a couple months. We believe this is an appropriate way to recognize his years of service to our congregation and to provide support during what will be a difficult period of transition

Members who would like to contribute toward these expenses may designate their gifts to Special Projects on Vanco and to **Special Projects - Pastor Pope** if contributing by envelope/check.

Newsletter Items

The newsletter will be sent out during the first week of each month. If you have information that you would like included, it needs to be submitted by the 25th of the previous month. These items may be emailed to office@gsholmen.org. Please note in the subject of the email that it is for the newsletter. Thank you.

Looking for Volunteers

Are you looking for a way to be more involved at Good Shepherd? We can always use more Ushers, Greeters, Cleaners, and Counters. All of these jobs are done by volunteers from the congregation. Volunteers work on a rotation, and can be scheduled around other events you have. Please reach out to a member of the Church Council or email the office at office@gsholmen.org if you have any questions or would like to volunteer. Thank You!

2025/2026 Year in Review

June marks the end of our Church's Fiscal Year. Below I have highlighted some of our fund accounts, income accounts and the total expense account in comparison to 2024/2025 fiscal year.

	2025	2026	difference	Percent of Change
Increased Future Ministry Fund	\$ 192,924	\$ 224,587	\$ 31,663	16%

\$31,663 designated by budgetary and offerings.

	2025	2026	difference	Percent of Change
Increased Benevolence Fund	\$ 795	\$ 3,400	\$ 2,605	328%

328% increase over 2024/2025 fiscal year.

	2025	2026	difference	Percent of Change
Increased Offerings	\$ 258,627	\$ 278,031	\$ 19,404	8%

This represents service plate offerings, ACH as well as VANCO offerings only.

	2025	2026	difference	Percent of Change
Increased Total Income	\$ 385,166	\$ 432,323	\$ 47,157	12%

Total income, including plate offerings, all of our Ministry funds, Pre-School tuitions and grants.

	2025	2026	difference	Percent of Change
Decreased Unrestricted Cash Balance	\$ (12,192)	\$ (1,083)	\$ (11,109)	91%

This is our unrestricted cash balance reserves in relationship to our restricted cash balance reserves. We started the year off with a negative -\$12,192 and ended the year only at -\$1,083.

	2025	2026	difference	Percent of Change
Increased Total Expenses	\$ 320,697	\$ 449,210	\$ 128,513	40%

2026 expenses included an additional full time teacher, HVAC/electrical improvements, exterior painting, parking lot maintenance and installation of new playground equipment. With previous year's special project funds and above mentioned increased offering we were able to close our year under budget and debt free.

Update on Our Mission Enhancement Status

Dear Members of Good Shepherd,

We want to share an important update regarding Good Shepherd's Mission Enhancement through WELS Home Missions.

In light of Pastor Pope's resignation and our current pastoral vacancy, the District Mission Board recently met to discuss Good Shepherd's approved enhancement for a staff minister. After careful consideration, and with heavy hearts, the board determined that it is necessary to withdraw the enhancement at this time.

As a result, Good Shepherd will not be moving forward with calling a staff minister at this time. The Mission Enhancement funding was intended to help make that additional ministry position possible, and without that support, the call process for a staff minister will not continue.

The reality is that there are significant mission needs throughout the district and across our synod. With no clear timeline for when Good Shepherd will receive and welcome a new pastor, the Mission Board did not believe it would be wise to hold those funds indefinitely when they can be put to use supporting ministry elsewhere.

While this is certainly disappointing news, the District Mission Board was also very encouraging about Good Shepherd's future. Once the Lord blesses us with a new pastor, he has had time to get established, and our congregation is again moving forward with its strong outreach efforts, the board would be very willing to work with us to update our plans and submit a new Mission Enhancement request. At that point, we could once again consider the possibility of adding a staff minister as part of our ministry plans.

Our Church Council shares the disappointment that comes with this decision, but we also understand the wisdom behind it. The circumstances at Good Shepherd have changed considerably over the past month or two, and our immediate focus now needs to be navigating the vacancy faithfully, supporting our ministry, and preparing for the pastor the Lord will provide in His time.

We remain thankful for the encouragement and support we have received from our District Mission Board and WELS Home Missions. Most importantly, we continue to trust the Lord's promise that He works "all things" — including this — for the good of those who love Him.

Please continue to keep Good Shepherd, our vacancy pastor, our future pastor, and the ministry opportunities before us in your prayers.

In Christ,

Jacob Werre

Church President

Call Meeting Scheduled

We will be having our call meeting to call a pastor on Wednesday, September 9th at 6:30pm. District President Jensen will be leading the meeting. All are encouraged to attend!

September Birthdays

Whitney	Wacker	09/01
Jessica	Gamoke	09/03
Alan	Ross	09/04
Mason	Bateman	09/04
Ray	Sandvick	09/05
Taylor	Sill	09/05
Zachary	Larson	09/05
Jenaya	Larson	09/08
Dorian	Bautch	09/08
Graham	Sime	09/10
Haven	Blankenship	09/11
Samantha	Wolfe	09/12
Kirsten	Olson	09/12
Carson	Karow	09/12
Olivia	Lyga	09/12
Stefanie	McCoy	09/13
Joshua	Lipps	09/14
Kyle	Sime	09/14
Jessica	Blankenship	09/14
Daniel	Schams	09/18
Barb	Weinberger	09/26
Henry	Karow	09/26
Mark	Ross	09/27
John	McDonald	09/29

October Birthdays

Joanna	Grochowski	10/01
Debi	Blankenship	10/01
Mike	Fixmer	10/03
Aspen	Blankenship	10/03
Alexander	McCarty	10/06
Kennedy	Behn	10/06
Gemma	Rieck	10/09
McKenzie	Mico	10/10
Sylvia	McDonald	10/10
Kyle	Gamoke	10/11
Michael	Evenson	10/11
Fredrick	Heuer	10/13
Chad	Herbers	10/13
LouAnne	Farley	10/13
Chad	Wacker	10/14
Bruce	Jorstad	10/15
Layne	Helmreich	10/17
Darlene	Evenson	10/17
Larry	Rockwell	10/19
Mike	Raabe	10/19
Susan	Peterson	10/20
Christian	Hauser	10/21
Gwendolyn	Schams	10/23
Jayne	Karbula	10/23
Jennifer	Gerke	10/23
Evelyn	Sting	10/24
Zachary	Menden	10/29
Seth	Gartner	10/31
Stacie	Boisen	10/31

September Schedule				
Sunday, September 6th		Week of September 6th to September 12th		
9:00am Ushers	Greeters	Counters & Cleaners		
Aaron Larson	Sarah Larson	Counters:	Cleaners:	
Mark Bateman		Jacob Werre	McDonald	Sanctuary
		Cassie Huiss		
Sunday, September 13th		Week of September 13th to September 19th		
9:00am Ushers	Greeters	Counters & Cleaners		
Mark Ross	Nicole Ross	Counters:	Cleaners:	
Alan Ross	Odetta Ross	Aaron & Sarah Larson	Proksch	Sanctuary
Sunday, September 20th		Week of September 20th to September 26th		
9:00am Ushers	Greeters	Counters & Cleaners		
Mike Melott	Tammy Melott	Counters:	Cleaners:	
Mark Bateman		Al Herbers	Mark Ross	Sanctuary
		Carl Newman		
Sunday, September 27th		Week of September 27th to October 3rd		
9:00am Ushers	Greeters	Counters & Cleaners		
Jacob Werre	Kathy Werre	Counters:	Cleaners:	
Bennett King		Chad & Whitney Wacker	Bateman	Sanctuary
Church Wall Dusting-- Herbers				

Please note that the church calendar is subject to change. For the most up-to-date calendar, please check our church website as the calendar changes often. www.gsholmen.org.

SUN 30 9am Sunday Morning Worst 4:30pm Youth Ministry Nigh	MON 31 6:30pm Monday Night Wors	TUE 1	WED 2 5pm Catechism Class	THU 3	FRI 4	SAT 5
6 9am Sunday Morning Worst 4:30pm Youth Ministry Nigh	7 Labor Day	8 1st Day of Preschool	9 5pm Catechism Class	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 5pm Catechism Class	17	18	19
50th Anniversary Celebration 9am Sunday Morning Worst 10-15am Anniversary Preser 11:45am Anniversary Lunch						
20 9am Sunday Morning Worst 10-15am 1st Day of Sunday s 10-15am Bible Study	21 6:30pm Monday Night Wors	22	23 5pm Catechism Class	24	25	26
27 9am Sunday Morning Worst 10-15am Sunday School 10-15am Bible Study	28 6:30pm Monday Night Wors	29	30 5pm Catechism Class	Oct 1	2	3