

The Shepherd's Voice

December 2025

439 E. Norvell Bryant Hwy, Hernando, FL 34442

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Interim

Pastor's Devotion

This is the Advent Season! It is a time of much excitement and preparation for the celebration of Christmas. Here we are, starting the countdown of shopping days until Christmas (which the retailers began to do way back in September). Looking at our "To Do Lists" we may already feel stressed-out wondering how we are going to get everything done by Christmas!

This is the Advent Season! It is a time to "take some time out" from our busyness to prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of the coming of our Lord Jesus! It is his birth in Bethlehem and the continuing rebirth of Christ in our lives that gives us the true "reason for the season". If God had not sent His only Son to be born for us, he could have not died and rose again on the third day to give us life and salvation. There would be no Christmas celebration or saving hope for our world. "To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior is Christ the Lord. "And this is what will prove it to you; you will find a baby wrapped in clothes and lying in a manger" (Luke 2:11-12)

This is the Advent Season! A time to prepare for the gift of the Savior's peace and saving love so much needed in this world that is filled with ever increasing violence, bullying, division, war, economic uncertainty, and disaster. "For God so loved the world that He sent his only Son whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16)

This is the Advent Season! A time "away from the countdown" to listen to the hope-filled message of the angels about the coming Savior in a world yearning for hope and peace: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" (Luke 2:14)

This is the Advent Season! I hope we all take time out from our busyness to truly prepare to "welcome the Lord Jesus whose crib and cross" is our hope, our peace and our salvation. Let us, then, respond in praise to Him by remembering the hope-filled filled message of the angels in the hymn:

"Hark the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born king.

Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."

Joy-ful, all your nations rise; Join the triumph of the skies;

With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born king!"

This is the Advent Season! To help you in your preparation, we invite you to worship with us during the four Sundays of Advent beginning on November 30th. On Sunday, December 14th there will be a special worship service that will include the presentation of a Christmas pageant "*The Night The Animals Sang*" by both our Church Choir and Sunday School. Invite your family and friends!

Also, in our preparation to celebrate *'CHRIST THE LORD'S BIRTH"*,

I invite you to our <u>Wednesday Evening Advent Informal Worship Services and Special activities:</u>

December 3 from 5:30pm -6:30pm.there will be a **Simple Advent Worship Service and a Chili Cookoff. Soup also will be available. Bring your favorite Chili. Ribbons will be awarded to the winners of our chili cookoff.** Worship and the cook off will take place in the Fellowship Hall.

December 10th 5;30 PM-6:30PM there will be a Simple Advent Worship Service followed by Hotdogs, marshmallows and S'mores around a Campfire (Firepit). There with telling of Stories and Singing of Christmas Carols around the Campfire (firepit). Bring a lawn chair and blanket (if chilly). Activities in Fellowship Hall and outside. Of course, weather permitting. If the weather does not cooperate or the burn ban continues activities will take place in our fellowship hall.

December 17th 5:30PM-6:30PM there will be a Simple Worship Service with pizza, a cookie exchange and a visit with Santa Claus.

Celebrate with us the Birth of our Savior at our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 6:30 P.M. *"Oh, come all ye faithful!"*

Christmas Love, Joy and Blessings, Pastor Bob

President's Message



As I write this newsletter article just before Thanksgiving, it gives me pause to realize how blessed and thankful I am. It has been such an amazing year watching all of the great work our committees are doing. If you have not volunteered yet but have been wanting to get around to it, I highly encourage you to do so. Every committee could use you. The reward of volunteering your time and talent pays dividends that will enrich your life.

Speaking of enriching your life. The Craft Fair, led by Renate, was very well attended and successful which will help in our mission work with our food pantry and hygiene kits. What was so enriching was what most of us were not expecting that warm Saturday morning. Pastor Bob mentioned this in his November 23 sermon. We had two different homeless men show up unexpectedly. Richie showed up early before the craft fair started. The night before Richie had been beaten and robbed by three other homeless men. He showed up beaten and bloodied at Good Shepherd with his rescue kitten. Several members of Good Shepherd stepped up and offered care of him. This is what I love so much about our Good Shepherd family!

After the craft fair started the second homeless gentleman showed up hungry and needed help. Due to circumstances beyond his control, he is temporarily homeless and living with his dog in his truck. Once again, another Good Shepherd member stepped up and bought him lunch from the food truck that was at the craft fair. Several members have been helping him with food and other assistance since the fair.

While I always let Pastor Bob provide the spiritual guidance, I just want to share with you that my favorite parable is the Good Samaritan. I witnessed it playing out at the craft fair. Additionally, one of my favorite verses in the Bible is Matthew 25:40, which is a part of Jesus's teachings about the final judgment. In this verse, he states, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Have a Blessed Christmas,

Joe

Church Council News



The Council met on November 13th and took the following actions:

- Approved Christian Education's request to purchase equipment not to exceed \$1000 to start a podcast.
- Approved the purchase approximately 50 copies of "I Am a Church Member "by Thom Rainer for the library and for new members.
- Approved Fairview Estates building use requests.
- Approved Outreach Committee requests for:
 - Christmas Gala with the Art Center Singers on December 13 from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.
 - 2. Movie night on January 17 from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. with light snacks.
 - 3. Valentine's Dinner or Men's Appreciation Dinner on February 14.
- Approved the SOS reverse Advent calendar for December and food collection the first two Sundays in December to benefit SOS.
- Approved the Citrus Hills Women's Club building use request for January 10, 2026.
- Approved Life South Blood Centers to host blood drives before and after service at various times from Jan. through April 2026.



WELCA NEWS

As a community of women create in the image of God called to discipleship in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.

The Florida -Bahamas Synodical Women's Organization met for Fall Gathering in Fruitville Park Florida.(November 7,8,9 2025)

118 attended with 33 voting members.

Business meeting was about rewrite to our constitution and voting in a New VP, Donna Person was elected.

Pastor M. Romo led us in Bible study using Romans 8-14.

Many workshops to attend and I enjoyed each one of them.

Ladies are invited to a Luncheon Tuesday December 9, 2025 Noon Christmas cafe 1482 US 41, Inverness Fl 2

WELCA Board

Nancy Gomes Circle and Event Coordinator

Aagot Green Treasurer

Cindy Gaertner Secretary



From Gratitude to Grace: Outreach in December

As the echoes of Thanksgiving linger in our hearts, December invites us into a season of anticipation and reflection. We've gathered around tables, shared stories, and thanked God for His abundant blessings. Now, we turn our gaze toward Bethlehem, where the greatest gift of all—Jesus Christ—was born into a world in need of hope.

This in-between time is rich with opportunity for outreach. While the world rushes toward Christmas with shopping lists and festive lights, we are called to slow down and extend Christ's love to those who may feel forgotten. Whether it's a warm meal, a kind word, or a simple invitation to worship, our acts of service become living testimonies of God's grace. Outreach isn't just about programs—it's about presence.

Let us remember that Advent is not only a countdown to Christmas, but a call to prepare our hearts and homes for the coming of Christ. As we light candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, may we also be bearers of those gifts to our neighbors. The Outreach team encourages each member of our congregation to find one way to share Christ's light this month—through prayer, giving, or personal connection.

Together, we move from gratitude to grace, from harvest to manger. May our December be filled with holy moments of outreach, reminding others—and ourselves—that Emmanuel, God with us, is near.

Fellowship



Our Fellowship Committee meeting will be held on Monday, December 8, 2025, at 1:30 PM. We are asking our committee members to attend if their schedule allows.

The beginning of our Christmas season starts with the first Sunday of Advent on November 30, 2025. On the first Wednesday of Advent, we will have a chili-off and offer soup for people who cannot eat chili. Crackers and bread will be provided by our church. Please bring the prepared food to the Fellowship Hall between 5 and 5:15 pm. Supper begins at 5:30 and worship starts at 6:30. Signup sheets will be in the Narthex. **Note**: separate sheets will be available for chili, soup and attendance. Please make sure to sign attendance so we will have prepared food for everyone. The next planned Advent Wednesday is on December 10 with hot dogs, smores, cider and hot chocolate around the outside campfire. If you prefer, the congregation may stay in the Fellowship Hall. On December 17, there will be pizza and a cookie exchange. Everyone is welcome.

If you would like to help with serving coffee, tea, or with cleaning up after worship, please sign your name on the volunteer sheet near the coffee bar in the Fellowship Hall. Please consider helping when you can. It will take about an hour of your time once a month and will be greatly appreciated. We are asking our congregation to occasionally help with bringing a dessert. It does not need to be homemade. Anything from a bakery whether it is gluten free, sugar free, or a regular dessert will help with making our coffee hour special for our members. Thank you in advance. **NOTE: Volunteers are needed in the Fellowship kitchen with serving coffee after worship service!**

Elaine Giammasi, Chair John Giammasi, Co-chair

Call Committee

The chart shows the steps the congregation is going through in the call process. We are through first 5 steps and eagerly awaiting a Call List from the Synod, once they have potential candidates for the Call Committee to consider. Please continue to keep the call committee and the congregation in your prays as we continue the process.

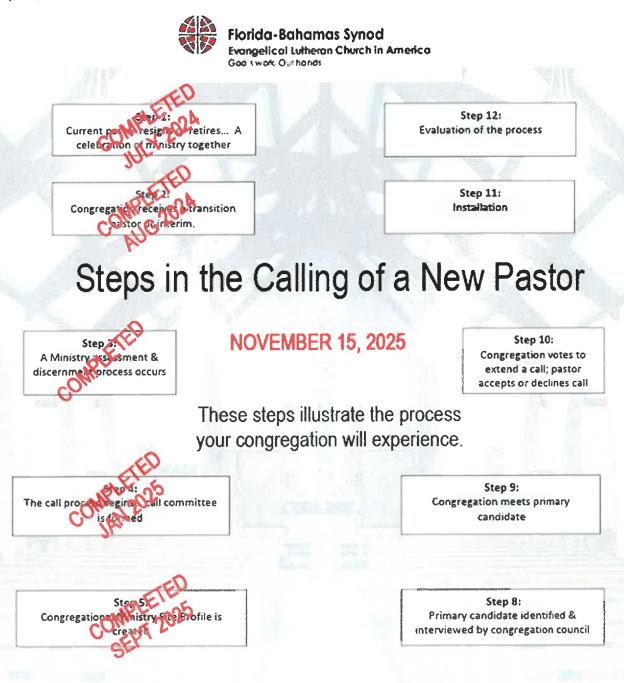
See Poster of this chart in the Narthex

John Lepore, ZoAnn Weimer, Mel Pease, John Reichert, Lenore Deck, Nina Giglio

Step 6:

A Call List is formed

AWAITING FROM SYNOD



Step 7:

Interview of candidates

Serving Our Savior





SOS OCTOBER DISTRIBUTION REPORT

WEEK	FAMILIES	PERSONS	FOOD	WEIGHT
				PER
ENDING	SERVED	SERVED	WEIGHT	FAMILY
10/2/25	145	431	7,975	55lbs
10/9/25	149	374	6,705	45lbs
10/16/25	147	437	6,525	45lbs
10/23/25	140	360	7,700	55lbs
10/30/25	172	517	8,600	50lbs
TOTALS	753	2,119	37,505	



DONATE





Sharon Maxwell In Memory of Anne Storan

Beck & Steve Hack in Memory of Jerry Waara

David & Gary Lewis in Memory of Elish Lewis

TRIVENT Contribution

Nate Williams to SOS Food Pantry

Elfrieda Romanelli in Memory of Pastor Ohsiek to SOS Food Pantry



Property Committee





GSLC PROPERTY TEAM

How many Property people does it take to install new LED lights? All five !!!

"WE A TEAM SWEET PEA"



Eucharistic Ministry



Volunteers are always needed to assist at Services held at assisted living facilities. Compass Rose is the first and third Mondays. Best Care is on the second Monday. The Reserve is the fourth Monday. All services start at 10 AM and volunteers are needed before service to assist those needing help.

Contact Rick Mainster or Sharon Maxwell.

Health Ministry

Health Ministry Your Faith Community Nurse is Kathy Metz, she can be reached @ 352 746-1911 and the Health Team Members are: Barb Lauer, Donna Pease, John Colson, and Leith Masters. We provide blood pressure screenings on the last Sunday of the month after worship.

We always take donations for Hygiene kits.



Christian Education



Christian Education

We have *finally* completed the assessment regarding our book study we have been working on, "Growing Young". This assessment was carried out by seventeen different members of our congregation. These people varied from long-time members, newbies, youth, and a few in between.

This information that was gained from this evaluation will help lead us to areas for improvement when dealing with our youth. I cannot thank all of you that took part in helping us in this task.

With all this information in hand, we will be starting a podcast within the near future. This podcast will include the children of Good Shepherd interacting with adults of the congregation. We will record the podcast twice a month.

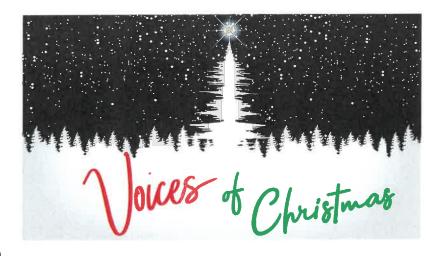
Each topic will be decided by the youth, Christian Ed, and the council for content. Some of the ideas coming from the youth include, "one thing you would like an adult to know about life for you now/one thing you would like a child to know about your life now" with discussion. If you would like to be involved, please let me know. We are <u>very</u> excited to begin this inter-generational journey.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Fowler, Christian Ed Chair

Yours in Christ
Sue Fowler
Christian Ed Chairman





Having the L.C.C. K-9 Support Dog Ministry here at Good Shepherd on

November 16th was quite exciting! I was the "ambassador"/"liaison" from the church. I felt so important showing them where we had set up water for the dogs ready to go, where they could relieve themselves, and having seating in the church ready for them. I was excited to see the dogs and so were so many of the congregation. They go so many places to help bring comfort in times of terrible things. It is sad that bad things happen, but great that L.C.C. K-9's are there to offer a sense of peace that dogs can give. Peace and Moriah are beautiful dogs and what they give is such a blessing!

Isaiah 26:3 ~ You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

John 14:27 ~ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.



DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS PAGE

As we had 90 plus names listed on our "Relatives and Friends" prayer list in our "Monthly Newsletter "instead of

listing all the person(s)' names, we offer the following "Options" so that you/we can regularly lift up your/our "Relative and Friends" in prayer.

We invite you to raise up the person(s) name silently or aloud at our Sunday Morning Worship Service during the "Intercessory Prayer" as we pray "The Prayer for Healing" as we give the congregation the opportunity to lift up our name(s) of concern "aloud or silently in our hearts."

We invite you to share your prayer concern(s) by writing the person(s)' name and concern on the back of the "Welcome"/Prayer Request" card found in the pew rack and then place it in the offering plate. Your prayer request(s) will be specifically lifted up during our "Wednesday Morning Prayer Service.

We invite you to attend our "Wednesday Morning Prayer Service" beginning at 9:00 am. It is a simple prayer service at which you can personally raise up the person(s)' names and concern either "silently or aloud."

We invite you to place your "Relative or Friend" name(s) on our "Prayer Chain" by contacting Marcia Reichert at mareichert55@gmail.com

We offer the following "General Prayer" that you may regularly use as you pray for your "Relative and Friends" for the Lord's blessing, compassion, healing and wholeness:

"Compassionate God, look with favor upon those who are sick, suffering, grieving or have any need (especially.....INCLUDE NAME(S) and grant them healing, comfort, wholeness and your peace that surpasses all human understanding. In Jesus' name. Amen

God's Blessing Always!

"The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in Truth." (Psalm145:1)

Newsletter Editor



NEWS LETTER DEADLINE DECEMBER 20TH



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Email: admin@gslchernando.org

SUNDAY SCHOOL/NURSERY— SUE FOWLER

LECTORS

DECEMBER 3rd WEDNESDAY ANN SERAFIN

DECEMBER 7th SUNDAY MARGOT BERGER
DECEMBER 10th WEDNESDAY MARGOT BERGER

DECEMBER 14th SUNDAY MARTIE ZACHARCZYK

DECEMBER 17th WEDNESDAY PAT MAINSTER
DECEMBER 21st SUNDAY VERA SWADE

DECEMBER 24th CHRISTMAS EVE JOHN GIAMMASI

DECEMBER 28th SUNDAY SHELLY FORTIN

USHERS

DECEMBER 7th

LEITH MASTERS LOIS LENHART ROBERT DESTROMP

DECEMBER 14th

LEITH MASTERS MAGGIE KIRKEBY HARV JOHNSON

DECEMBER 21st

DAVE & PEG BOCKER GARY KNECHT

CHRISTMAS EVE

LOIS LENHART ROBERT DESTROMP HARV JOHNSON

DECEMBER 28th

MAGGIE KIRKEBY CHERIE EARL HARV JOHNSON

MEDIA CENTER

FRAN STETSON JOHN GIFFORD JOE ADAMS DAN CASHMAN

DEACON

JOHN COLSON

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STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Building / Property

Harv Johnson 352-270-3391

Christian Education

Sue Fowler 352-464-0571

Enduring Gifts

Dan Cashman 352- 400-6024

Evangelism (Outreach)

Tom Stickler 610-659-5553

Fellowship

John & Elaine Giammasi 352-527-8706

Finance

Gail Sotrines 352-860-1765

Social Ministry

Vera Swade 352-637-5308

Stewardship

Mike Busler 860-906-8234

Technology

Fran Stetson 352-419-7227

Worship & Music

Renate Williams 352-228-7809

COUNCIL LIAISONS

Building / Property

John Colson 352-634-5470

Christian Education - YOUTH

John Giammasi 352-527-8706

Enduring Gifts

Ann Serafin 973-713-2528

Evangelism (Outreach)

Sue Buldiger 908-303-2021

Fellowship

Gladys Kean 352-514-6998

Finance

Kathy Swartz 352-422-6717

Social Ministry

Karen Monsen 727-858-0265

Stewardship

Dan Cashman 352-419-4356

Technology

Fran Stetson 352-419-7227

Worship & Music

Martha Zacharczyk 732-740-6486



WEBSITE

gshern and o.org

Webmaster: Stephanie Adams webmaster@gslchernando.org



Kid's Corner



ADVENT CALENDAR

Please collect the items listed below and place them on the designated table in the back of Fellowship Hall the week of Christmas. We will donate the contents to SOS Food Pantry.

December 1-box of cereal

December 2- peanut butter

December 3-stuffing mix

December 4-boxed potatoes

December 5- hamburger helper*

December 6- canned fruit

December 7 – canned tomatoes

December 8- canned tuna

December 9 - dessert mix

December 10 - jar of applesauce

December 11 - canned sweet potatoes

December 12 - cranberry sauce

December 13 – canned beans

December 14 - box of crackers

December 15 - package of rice

December 16 - granola bars

December 17 – package of pasta

December 18 - spaghetti sauce**

December 19 - any "cream of" soup

December 20 – tomato soup

December 21 - diced tomatoes

December 22 – can of mixed vegetables

December 23 - can of carrots

December 24 - can of peas



^{**} Please, for safety and storage leasons, make sure this spaghetti sauce is packaged in a can or plastic jar,





WEDNESDAYS A TIME FOR PRAYER

				WEDNESDAY	S A TIME FOR	CTRATER
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 10:00 AM EM Compass Rose 1:30 PM Social Ministry	2 8:30 AM Weight Watchers 1:00 PM Worship & Music 6:30 PM Cub Scouts 6:30 PM Bells	Quilters	4 7:30 AM SOS 9:00 AM CFQG** 9:30 AM Executive 1:00 PM Outreach 2:00 PM Stewardship	9:00 AM GREENING OF THE CHURCH WORK Day a t Church	6 10:00 – 2:00 Sp. Lang Church
7 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Sunday School	8 10:00 AM EM Quality Carer 10:00 AM Finance 1:30 PM Fellowship	9 OFFICE CLOSED	10 9:00 AM Prayer 6:30 PM Advent Service 6:30 PM Choir Practice	11 7:30 AM SOS 3:00 PM Council	12 8:00 AM Church WORKDAY	13 10:00 – 2:00 Sp. Lang Church
14 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Sunday School 3:00 PM Piano Recital	15 10:00 AM EM Compass Rose	16 8:30 AM Weight Watchers 6:30 PM Bells 6:30 PM Cub Scouts	17 9:00 AM Prayer 10:00 AM Quilters 6:30 PM Advent Service 6:30 PM Choir Practice	18 7:30 AM SOS 10:00 AM Christian Ed 11:00 AM CCFQG	8:00 AM	20 10:00 – 2:00 Sp. Lang Church Rowsletter Mitcles
21 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Sunday School	22 10:00 AM EM Reserve	23 8:30 AM Weight Watchers 6:30 PM Bells	24 9:00 AM Prayer 6:30 PM Christmas Service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26 8:00 AM CHURCH WORK DAY	27 10:00 – 2:00 Sp. Lang Church
28 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Sunday School	29	30 8:30 AM Weight Watchers 6:30 PM Bells	31			
	Breakfast at Mama's Kuntry Kafe Every Tuesday @ 7:30 a.m. **EUCHARISTIC MINISTRY **CITRUS COUNTY FRIENDSHIP QUILTERS GROUP					