

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church

*A vibrant faith community of Northwest New Jersey.
A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

Welcomes people in faith to Jesus.
Equips us with the tools to make our faith work in the world.
Sends us in service into the world.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun., Dec., 20	Fourth Sunday of Advent 9 AM – Worship of the Word in Church and on YouTube
Thurs., Dec., 24	Christmas Eve – Office Closed 7 and 8:30 p.m.- Christmas Eve Services in church, (reservations required) and on YouTube.
Fri., Dec., 25	Christmas Day – No Service
Sun., Dec., 27	First Sunday of Christmas 9 AM – Worship of the Word in Church and on YouTube
Fri., Jan 1	New Year's Day - Trinity Faith Kitchen - make sandwiches

WEEKLY MINISTRY:

Sunday Worship: 9 AM

In church, Live streamed on
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran
Church channel on YouTube

Church Office:

Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday,
10 AM – 2 PM
973-729-7010

Youth Education Sept to May:

Faith Formation: TBD
Confirmation: Wed eve. 7 -8 pm
Zoom (2x/month)

Church Staff:

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jack DiMatteo
Email: pastor@sothnj.org
Emergencies: 908-887-1161

Adult Education:

Brown Bag Bible Study – Wed. 12 PM
(2x/month)
New Disciples Classes as announced

Music Director: Mr. Ronn Sacchiero

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES – Will be at 7 and 8:30 p.m. with **reservations required**. Please respond to the email from SignUp Genius, call or email the church office, or sign the reservation sheet in the church narthex with your choice of service and the number attending. All CDC guidelines will be observed, masks required, with a maximum of 100 at each service utilizing the sanctuary, balcony and live-streaming in the parish hall. **Worship Servants are needed**. Please contact the church office or sign up in the Church Narthex. There is no service scheduled for Christmas Day.

AT-HOME COMMUNION KITS – If you are worshipping with us from home and would like a communion kit, please contact the church office and arrangements can be made for you to receive the number you would like.

The Voice from the Hills

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church



246 Woodport Road, Sparta, NJ 07871

www.sothnj.org ☎ 973-729-7010 ✉ office@sothnj.org

All are welcomed, equipped, and sent into the world to be the Good News of Christ Jesus.

Ministers: The Disciples of Shepherd of the Hills

For the Week of December 20, 2020

Grace and peace to you from the One that creates, loves, and sustains us all. There are four things that remain constant in this time:

God loves you. God is with you.
God calls you beloved. You are not alone.

JOIN US IN PRAYER:

HOMEBOUND OR ILLNESS: Jerry Battifarano, Alice Bornemann, Alice Busch, Jenny Cortese, Wally Erck, Edwin Foster, Elsie Haller, Vincent Hassa, Joe Hummers, Alberta Iannotti, Rita Jennings, Kay Kozdeba, Lois Lake, Janice Mason, Ryan Mueller, Peter Nicoletti, Sylvia Perara, Jack Polcer, Carol Regad, Melissa Sacchiero, Ronn Sacchiero, Elsa Schock, Diane Simonson, Jacqueline Spink, Gerald Tedesco, Nancy Vermuelen, Mimi Whipple.

IN THE MILITARY: Army: Larry Osborne, Kurt Rossi, Brendan McMahon; Army National Guard: Matthew Smaldino, Ryan Wood; Navy: Kurt Bethmann, Gary McCrea; Marines: CJ Simonson, Hannah Sigman

ECUMENICAL PRAYER CYCLE: For December 20 to 26 we join Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Taiwan in prayer. Visit www.oikoumene.org for more information about these countries.

FOR YOUR DAILY DEVOTIONS:

DAILY BIBLE TEXTS: The following is a list of daily Bible readings for your home devotions. Sunday through Wednesday reflect on Sunday's lessons. Thursday through Saturday readings prepare you for Sunday's lessons:
Sun., Dec., 20: *Isaiah 7:10-16, Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (7), Romans 1:1-7, Matthew 1:18-25*
Mon., Dec., 21: *2 Samuel 7:18, 23-29, Galatians 3:6-14, Luke 1:46b-55*
Tues., Dec., 22:
Weds., Dec., 23:
Thurs., Dec., 24: *Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96 (11), Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)*
Fri., Dec., 25: *Isaiah 62:6-12, Psalm 97 (11), Titus 3:4-7, Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20*
Sat., Dec., 25: *Wisdom 4:7-15, Acts 7:59-8:8, Psalm 148*

STREAMING IS HERE! We are excited to announce that you can now view our service **live at 9:00 a.m. each Sunday**. Click on this link to see the service and subscribe to our SOTH channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCH8w_r1Rb9HH7i6SD15Tu6w

Don't worry if you missed the live broadcast. All services are archived on our channel. We are no longer Zooming our weekly service. You can also search for us on Facebook and like our page.

<https://www.facebook.com/SOTHNJ/>.

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL UPDATES:

The current Council is the following (reorganizational meeting scheduled for Jan. 2021):

President: To be determined

Vice President: JD Allen - 973-723-3501

Treasurer: Diane Terhune – 201-841-9726

Recording Secretary: Celeste Bethmann - 201-859-7475

Financial Secretary: Steve Lewandowski – 973-670-0773

Property: Patrick Wood – 201-602-4219

Nurture (Worship & Music): Wendy Whipple – 973-670-5123

Social Ministry: Diane Fitzpatrick – 973-216-8005

Newly elected members: Jeff Behling

Emery Malasits, Sr.

SERVING WORSHIP TODAY: Please remember to arrive 30 minutes before worship. Contact the church office with any changes.

9 AM	Dec 20	9 AM	Dec 27
Reader: Bill Lockwood	Reader: Pat Kovacs	Usher: JD Allen	Media: John Seal
Usher: Bob Kapral	Media: Barbara Osborne	CPIC: Celeste Bethmann	
Media: Barbara Osborne	CPIC: Steve Lewandowski		
CPIC: Steve Lewandowski	Financial Counters: Steve Lewandowski	Financial Counters: Diane Fitzpatrick	Mike Osborne
Financial Counters: Bob Fawcett	Altar Guild: Phyllis Fawcett	Altar Guild: Barbara Osborne	



Click [here](#) to find out how you can donate to SOTH when you shop on Amazon or call the church office for instructions.

We have raised \$126.03 to date!

BROWN BAG BIBLE STUDY -Continues in person at Holy Trinity Church or via Zoom, the **first and third Wednesdays from noon-12:45**. Join Pastor Jack for a lively discussion of the Bible. No prior experience necessary! Click [here](#) to join us via Zoom.

HAT AND MITTEN TREE – New hats, gloves and mittens for men, women and children will once again be accepted for distribution at Trinity Faith Kitchen in Dover. If handmade, please include the materials used and cleaning instructions. **Jan. 3** is the deadline.

GIFTS FOR PASTOR AND R. SACCHIERO- As in past years, if you wish to contribute to a monetary gift expressing gratitude, please see JD Allen, Council Vice President or send your contributions to the church office clearly labeled “holiday gift”. Thank you!

JOIN US WITH GENEROUS GIVING TO OUR MISSION with these gifts, we continue to welcome folks to our community, to equip them with faith tools – learning the word, prayers for one another, and communal support - to live in these days, and then to send us into a world to welcome others.

Please feel free to mail your offering to: SOTH, 246 Woodport Rd., Sparta, NJ 07871



Simply Giving:

Support the church through direct debit giving from your checking, savings, credit card or debit card.

Use your phone to scan the QR code to get started.

Or visit www.sothnj.org and click on the Simply Giving button



Text Giving

You may also text the amount you would like to give to **973-832-0226**. A message will help you complete the transaction.

You can make a one time gift or set up regular offerings

CHANGE IN TAX LAW FOR CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS – The IRS reminds us that, as part of the CARES Act, taxpayers can deduct up to \$300. in cash donations to qualifying organizations even if they choose to take the **standard deduction** rather than itemizing their deductions. Donations of up to \$300. **made before December 31, 2020**, are now deductible when people file their taxes in 2021. Further information regarding this new, temporary deduction can be found in IRS release IR-2020-264, issued on 11/25/2020 and in IRS Publication 526.