



Frequently Asked Questions



How do I dress to worship?

You will see the gamut of clothing at Good Shepherd. "Casual Friday" wear is the most common—slacks, polo shirts, skirt sets, sundresses. "Sunday best" suits and dresses are common, as are shorts and jeans (in summer). Sundays are generally more "formal" than weekday services. What matters is that your dress doesn't interfere with someone else's prayers. The focus is praising God and the beauty of being a community of faith.

Where should I sit?

Sit wherever you feel most comfortable. Good Shepherd members are good about spreading out, with more room to the right of the Altar.

Is there a nursery?

Yes, on Sunday's beginning at 9:00 am. The nursery is at the end of the hall past the elevator with a sign above the door. It's staffed by two trained, background checked nursery workers with years of experience. There's a wide variety of toys and a dedicated child sized restroom. All parents will be alerted if their child is experiencing an issue.

What programs do you have for children and youth?

During the school year, we offer Christian Formation Education for teen's at 9:00 am, children at 10:00 am. The children's program is age appropriate with multiple groups and qualified teachers with background checks. Our acolyte program allows youth ages 3 rd grade to High School to assist in worship leadership every Sunday at 10:15 am. Laura Williams is our paid staff member that works specifically with Junior and Senior High Youth. Laura plans monthly events with youth input like bowling, lunch, Halloween maze outings, movies, etc. Each summer they participate in one mission focused trip. Other summer programs for youth are organized at a diocesan level.

Is the building accessible?

We have several designated handicapped parking spaces close to the building. The entire first floor is on the same grade as the parking lot, no ramps required to access the building. We have accessible restrooms, and an elevator that makes the Parish Hall (one floor down) available for all. Our sound system is amplified. Large print editions of the Book of Common Prayer are available. Wheelchairs and walkers are available upon request.

Is Good Shepherd High Church or Low Church?

Those words are a bit 19th century. Basically, our worship is rather traditional, and we use incense on major occasions, so we're more middle of the road than anything else. We hope that the joy of the substance of our worship, and not the style, is what sticks with you.

How do I learn more about the Episcopal Church?

We have numerous printed tracts in the church foyer for you to take home and read. We also have classes ("Inquirer's Classes") a few weeks before our bishop's visitation. Please look at a fuller discussion by clicking on links found on the website. Also, you can always ask the priest to set an appointment about questions you might have.

Who are the clergy?

There are three kinds of ordained ministers in the Episcopal Church. All three are open to females and males. Bishops ("Right Reverend Madam" in writing, "Bishop Diane M. Jardine-Bruce" in speech) are charged with worldwide pastoral and teaching functions as well as overseeing congregations' in particular regions ("deaneries within the diocese"). Our Bishop, the Right Rev. Diane M Jardine-Bruce resides in Kansas City and visits Good Shepherd as her schedule allows. Priest, also called presbyters (a biblical word meaning "elder") oversee the sacramental life of a congregation. The Rev. Galen Snodgrass is our rector. Most people use some variant on "Father" for our priest. Just first name, however, are fine, or you can be formal and call me Mr. Snodgrass. Finally, deacons are ordained ministers who work in the world but specialize in social ministry outside the congregation. We often say, "the deacon is to have one foot in the world, the other in the church." They are called to make know to the congregation the social needs around the corner and around the world. Currently, we do not have a deacon, but God willing, we will soon. Once we do, they can be address as "Deacon" or "Mrs. or Mr."

What ministry opportunities do you offer?

For a mid-sized congregation, Good Shepherd is astonishingly active. Our Backpack Shepherd Program provides food to three area schools, one via a pantry, the other two a weekend backpack. We have a community garden and orchard. We donate underwear ("Undies Sunday"), shoes, socks, and other clothing at specific times. We support the Shepherd's Center, Northland Assistance Center, and Nourish KC. We have a microloan Kiva fund and purchase irrigation systems to Africa. Our Good Friday collection always goes to the Middle East as designate by the leadership (Holy Land Institute for the Deaf-Salt, Jordan/ Princess Basma Center to name two). We provide space for two polling stations, twice a year health clinic, Kansas City LGBTQ group, and other community groups. There's a knitting group, a beer group, bridge groups, model ship building group, and an art group if that's your interest. If you have a request for space or a new ministry, we have a policy and procedure to assist you through the office.

WEDDINGS

To whom do I talk with about a wedding?

First, to your fiancée. Generally speaking, only members or members of parish families are Wed at Good Shepherd Church. The clergy may perform a wedding. Please contact the office at 816-452-0745 to speak about your wedding. Since marriage only takes place after several sessions of pre-marital counseling with the clergy (3-6, depending on specific needs), we recommend calling no less than 6 months ahead of your planned day.

Can a divorced person be married in the Church?

Yes, with permission of the bishop, after counseling with the priest. The State of Missouri requires at least 6 months for remarriage after the final divorce decree.

Is there a cost for weddings?

No. A donation to the congregation and the officiating clergyman's discretionary fund is appreciated. We suggest \$150 for each. The discretionary account is audited, the funds helping those in need. In addition, it is customary to give an honorarium to musicians as recommended by the American Guild of Organist.

Anything I need to know about the wedding?

It is a religious service, which means only music of a vaguely religious nature. "Pop Songs" are for the reception. Photographers should be neither seen nor heard once the liturgy begins. Wedding planners are lovely for your reception. Thankfully the service itself is laid out in the Book of Common Prayer, which has had 500 years of practice, it really doesn't require help. You may write your own vows, but they will be the "second set" after the traditional vows "to have and to hold" which are taken by all persons married in Good Shepherd. Rice can be thrown.

BAPTISM

How do I schedule a baptism?

Baptism is the beginning and not the end of a person's faith journey, we ask that baptismal candidates to be regular participants in worship, either at Good Shepherd or at their home parish. Traditional dates are Epiphany, Easter Eve, Trinity Sunday, Pentecost, All Saint's Day. Call the office, (816) 452-0745, to begin the conversation.

Is a specific age for baptism?

At any age. For infants, we understand gathering family from out of town is a challenge, so arranged dates are possible. Adults are encouraged to join in group baptisms on major feast days listed on page 15 of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP).

What if I want to be immersed?

If you are old enough for safe submersion baptism, arrangements can be made. However, our historic marble font isn't large enough to submerge anyone over about 8 days of age. The YMCA or a local creek (in warm weather) can be scheduled with a bit of advance conversation. If necessary, a stock trough can be used for immersion in warm weather. Once again this will require a bit of advanced conversation.

PASTORAL CONCENS

Who do I contact for pastoral needs or emergencies?

A call to the office during the day (816) 452-0745 is advised. Fr. Galen is available at his cell number, which are found in the Good Shepherd Directory for emergencies any time day or night. Or an email to Fr. Galen frgalen.snodgrass@gmail.com

Will you pray for...?

Of course. Please fill in the form in your pew and include your name and telephone number, or call us, or email your request. After two months without further information, we remove people from the prayer list—please keep us apprised of progress. Good Shepherd also has a Daughter's of the King (DOK) chapter, and a prayer chain of members who will pray for you and your loved ones. Please call the office with those request or grant permission for this prayer to be shared with those groups via the prayer list found above.

What to do if you're in the hospital?

Due to HIPPA you or your family must contact the Good Shepherd Office (816) 452-0745 or Fr. Galen frgalen.snodgrass@gmail.com or call his cell (Good Shepherd Directory) when you're admitted. Please let us know the hospital, its location, and your room number.

