

Welcome to Church of the Good Shepherd

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. How do I become a member or associate member of Church of the Good Shepherd?**

New members are welcome at anytime! Express your desire to join by speaking to the Pastor. The Pastor periodically holds a New Member Colloquium for those persons interested in becoming members. This is an informal meeting where all interested persons may ask questions and learn more about each other and Church of the Good Shepherd. A Membership Form will be available to those persons wishing to join the church as a member or associate member. The information helps us stay in contact with people and identify the missions and ministries that dovetail with their interests and talents. Soon thereafter, all who wish are received into membership during a worship service.
- 2. How does one arrange for a baptism, marriage or a funeral?**

For each of these rites you need to speak to and meet personally with the Pastor. There may be fees, honoraria and other costs; please ask for a Fee Schedule so that you can make your plans. For more details please refer to our website, www.churchgoodshepherd.org.
- 3. What do I need to do to be confirmed?**

The Pastor meets personally with everyone who desires to be confirmed. Classes are held periodically for candidates to prepare for confirmation in the Episcopal Church. All candidates are confirmed by the Bishop during an official visitation. Adequate notice is given before these classes begin.
- 4. Do I have to be an Episcopalian to receive Holy Communion?**

Everyone desiring Holy Communion is invited to come forward at each service.
- 5. Do I need to use a contribution envelope?**

It is not necessary for you to have a contribution envelope. If you prefer to have a set of envelopes, please contact the Administrative Assistant at the church office, 727-733-4125. The Administrative Assistant will be happy to assign a set to you. You do not need to be a member or associate member to receive envelopes. Some people prefer to put in a loose check, give an online donation or have their bank mail us their contribution.
- 6. How do I receive contribution statements?**

When the church receives an identified donation (with a name and address attached); an account is automatically created for the donor. Statements are printed and mailed quarterly.
- 7. Where can I find out about church finances?**

Our church website, www.churchgoodshepherd.org, has a monthly summary of Church of the Good Shepherd's Income and Expenses. Contact our Treasurer with any questions or concerns. Our Finance Committee meets monthly and visitors may observe.
- 8. How do I make a donation to the Memorial Fund in memory of someone?**

Unrestricted monetary donations to the Memorial Fund may be made by writing a check to Church of the Good Shepherd and in the "memo" line designating that the gift is made "in memory of [person's name]."
- 9. How do I give a designated gift or item to the church?**

Please consult the Pastor for information on this type of request. While the Pastor and Vestry are eager to work with potential donors, some types of gifts offered to The Church of the Good Shepherd may not be accepted, for example, if there are subsequent costs related to the gift, or if the designated or desired use is highly restrictive. Please speak to our Treasurer for details on giving a gift of stock.
- 10. Where can I find the history of the Church of the Good Shepherd?**

Pamphlets with this information are available at the back of the sanctuary and on our website.
- 11. Where can I find out more information about the Pastor?**

Information about the Pastor's background and qualifications may be found by visiting our website.

12. How do I find out about activities at Church of the Good Shepherd?

The church calendar is on the website and in the "Weekly News" sheets. These are distributed at all services. Activities are also highlighted in our weekly email sent to subscribers.

13. Does Church of the Good Shepherd have a newsletter?

The "Weekly News" is available at each service, on our website, and in a weekly email to subscribers. Periodically during the year we print a "NewsPlus" edition when we have special information or announcements to share.

14. Do you mail any of the newsletters?

The "Weekly News" and "NewsPlus" editions are sent out to those who subscribe to our email service, hosted by "Constant Contact". To subscribe to Constant Contact, go to our website, www.churchgoodshepherd.org, and follow the directions.

15. What if I don't have access to the internet?

Copies of the "Weekly News" or "NewsPlus" edition are available on Sunday morning from the ushers. If you would like to have "NewsPlus" editions mailed to your home, please call the Administrative Assistant (733-4125) to be placed on the mailing. We do not typically mail the "Weekly News."

16. How many people attend the services?

Our recent attendance averages about 150 people per Sunday. Depending on the time of year, the early "Classic Traditional" service at 8:00 has between 25 and 40, and the "Family Traditional" service has between 100 and 180.

We worship at other times of the week, as well. About 20-30 people come to the service at Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. The type of worship varies between Classic Traditional, Healing, and Contemporary Traditional.

Beginning in September, 2014, each on Saturday at 5:00 p.m. we will have "Celtic Kirk", contemplative worship focusing on Celtic spirituality.

All attendance numbers are available from our Administrative Assistant.

17. What ministries are available at Church of the Good Shepherd?

A "Mission Moment" is included at the beginning of each service. These short presentations highlight a specific ministry and whom to contact if to be involved. You may speak to the contact person, to the Pastor, members of the Vestry or members of the church about current ministries that might interest you. A listing of current ministries is included in the Annual Report and in our Directory.

18. How do I get funding to support my ministry?

Our annual church budget is finalized in December each year. Budget considerations for your ministry need to be submitted on a "Budget Request" form before the budget is finalized. The Vestry makes the final decision as to the amount allocated to each ministry.

19. How may I be reimbursed for expenses incurred for an approved ministry at Church of the Good Shepherd?

Please be sure your purchase is approved before incurring any expense. If you have spent your own funds for an event or ministry and wish to be reimbursed, please fill out a "Payment Request" form available from the Administrative Assistant. Please be sure to have the form approved by the person responsible for that budget line item (usually a ministry team leader, committee chair, or the Pastor) before submitting it to the Administrative Assistant.

20. How do I reserve a meeting space?

If at all possible, church members should complete a "Facility Use Request Form" and give it to the Administrative Assistant. This form is available on the website and in the downstairs office. You may email or hand in the form. If you are in need of an immediate meeting space you may call or email the Administrative Assistant to see if space is available.

21. How do I get approval for a fundraiser to benefit the Church or one of its ministries?

You will need to fill out the "Proposal for Fund Raising Project" form and turn it in to the Treasurer to be presented at a Finance Committee meeting. If approved, your request will be presented at a Vestry meeting for consideration. An 8 week lead time is ideal for your request. Please follow the guidelines on the request form for what to do with money you collect.

22. What are the requirements for working with children at this church?

You must speak to either the Pastor or the Director of Christian Formation and complete the course "Safeguarding God's Children" required by the Diocese of Southwest Florida.

23. What are the office hours?

The church office is open from 9:00a.m. to 4:00p.m., Monday through Friday. During the summer, the office closes at 3:00p.m. The church office is closed for holidays.

24. Do you have to be a member or associate member of Church of the Good Shepherd to attend yoga class or the other groups or organizations that meet at the church?

You do not have to belong to the church to attend these groups. We enjoy having instructors or organizations use our facility. Most of the activities listed in our website or the "Weekly News" are open to the public. However, some of the outside community groups (Rotary, AA, Al-Anon, etc.) using our buildings are independent organizations with their own membership requirements. Please be sure to contact those organizations for further information.

25. What is the best way to contact the Pastor?

If you would like to schedule an appointment with the Pastor, please email the office at goodnews@churchgoodshepherd.org, or leave a phone message on the Pastor's office phone, 727-733-4125 ext. 206. For emergency situations, you may call the church office during business hours and speak with the Administrative Assistant at extension 202, or call the Pastor's cell phone at 727-458-2625.

26. Do you offer communion for those living in assisted living facilities, nursing homes or who are homebound?

We have a Pastoral Care Team of lay people trained to share Holy Communion with those unable to attend a worship service. Please contact the Administrative Assistant at the church office, 727-733-4125, to connect with the Pastoral Care Team.

27. What is the Discretionary Fund?

This fund, also known as the Rector's Fund, is used to help members and those in the community that are in need of financial assistance. Requests by non-members are reviewed by a committee before a decision is made. Church members are encouraged to speak directly to the Pastor when they need help. The privacy and confidentiality of church members is preserved as much as possible. The first Sunday of each month, the loose offering is designated for this fund. Additional designated gifts are welcome at any time.

28. How do I get a name tag?

A sign-up sheet is located in the rear of the Sanctuary. Please clearly print your name exactly as you wish it to appear on your tag. Wearing your name tag at church events allows us to learn your name and help you feel a part of the whole church community. New name tags are made every week and will be put on the name tag board for the following week.

29. How do I become a Vestry or Endowment Board Member?

There are qualifying criteria to become a member of the Vestry or the Endowment Board. If you meet the criteria you may request a nomination form to be completed before the Annual Meeting and Election, held in the early winter.

30. How do I sponsor the flowers for a particular Sunday?

A sign-up sheet is located in the rear of the Sanctuary. There are two sponsorships open for each week at \$25 each; you may take one or both. Please clearly print your name and whom you wish to honor or remember.

Payment may be made in cash, using an envelope found in the pew, or by check, designating "Flowers" on the memo line. Both can be put in the regular offering plate.

Vestry approval: 6/18/2014